

"THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE FIRST LINE SUPERVISOR"

by

Deborah A. Parr

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First Reader NORA FAIRES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

Second Reader NEIL O. LEIGHTON, PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

"AN OVERVIEW OF CHANGE "

THE REASONS WHY

PART I

"Twentieth century man, the obsolete generation, carries with him all his prejudices and conditionings. A separate strategy must be evolved to motivate him to accept and institute change by removing the economic and psychological threats associated with such change. The hope is great that twenty-first century man can be educated to accept and manage ambiguity, uncertainty, and complexity."

In recent years we have seen broad sweeping changes in our customs and mores which have been quite disconcerting to our more traditional ways of thinking. It is these changes, organizational in nature, that shake the very foundations of traditional management thinking. It is apparent that as organizations change, as they grow and prosper or struggle to gain a competitive position in the world market, the roles of the management representative or first-line supervisor must also change.

Man is a creature of habit and by nature does not readily accept new and untried things. It is this forced change in organizational roles and values that is causing such a stir in the white-collar workforce and the subject for this study.

In order for these changes to be beneficial, however, managers and supervisors must understand both old and new roles. In this case, new roles yet to be defined and agreed upon by all involved parties.

Today's supervisor and the supervisor (leader) of the future will require skills far different from that of the hard-nosed autocratic foreman of the fifties. Their job as planner, organizer, controller, and administrator will shift to one of facilitator, motivator, team coordinator, and resource manager. With this in mind, it is no wonder that the supervisor in the industrial workforce today feels alienated and threatened.

No longer can they perform in the traditional ways they know and feel most comfortable with. They are faced with the possibility that as the team and work group takes over their previous responsibilities, they will soon be left out in the cold, confronted with loss of authority, status, and eventually a paycheck.

In many instances supervisors were charged with working themselves progressively out of a job without any systematic planning for utilizing the managerial capacity which would be surplus. Middle management was encouraged to develop their work group to take on many of their duties. This eventually left the supervisor with only menial tasks such as paperwork, supply ordering, and running errands left to perform after the team took over.

Other managements systems have progressively enlarged the supervisor's span of control, with the ultimate goal of eliminating supervision. The implication of this action is that many, if not all, of the individuals currently functioning in the supervisory roles in these organizations will be displaced.

The supervisory role has always been a role in transition changing to meet the needs of organizations as they grew from small entrepreneurial enterprises to more modern corporate bureaucratic structures. But recent trends in organizational management have made the transition more rapid and dramatic.

Many factors have had a direct and lasting impact on the supervisor's role. They include the move toward generalized rather than highly specialized jobs, the merging of staff and line positions, fewer levels of management with decision-making responsibilities pushed to lower levels, emphasis on group activities and accountability rather than individual jobs, teamwork in problem-solving and implementation, and the move from activity based skill-oriented jobs to larger, more conceptual knowledge based roles.

Because the first-line supervisor is often viewed as the primary source of resistance to change, they are often the key person in organizational design efforts, particularly those seeking to improve productivity through the greater participation of production workers.

"Participation of hourly employees in decisions affecting their jobs has been observed to put new pressures on first-line supervisors since changes in hourly employee's jobs are part of a total systems change in the plants."

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The job content for both hourly and supervisory employees has changed drastically over the past years and all indications show that this role reversal will continue into the next decade.

"Traditional hierarchies in organizations are being replaced by problem-solving units and networking mechanisms. Numbers of management levels are declining and new corporate cultures are

developing. These conventional management systems are becoming less appropriate in the face of change. Continuing attempts toward total control have failed. They appear to generate barriers in organizations and between organizational and stakeholder groups."

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"There have been many changes in the role of foreman over the past 100 years. These changes have been very dramatic and are still in process. They are primarily the result of our shift patterns of work and production. For centuries people have worked—either individually or collectively—to produce goods consisting of the elemental processes involved in the preparation of food, shelter, clothing, weapons, and tools—usually for the consumption or use of the individual or his family."

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Extensive research has been conducted on the changing role of the first-line supervisor. Studies from companies that have instituted these types of changes have reported varying degrees of success, but few have been able to provide a clear cut prescription for a change of this magnitude. An important aspect that deserves consideration but has often been overlooked is the organizations role in this transformation ,the WHO, or the principle driver in the change process. The next few pages will discuss this in detail. In addition, trends in the business climate that precipitated the change, the WHY along with the WHAT that can be done to lessen the stress accompanying such drastic change will be highlighted.

This first section will explore each of these major considerations in depth and attempt to provide rationale for actions that have already been initiated as well as predictions for the future.

"The Organization's Role"

"Industry is changing rapidly. So are the people in it.

Old procedures and systems must make way for new ones. Peoples' attitudes, needs, and desires change. The concepts with which we supervise our people must be flexible enough to be remolded as the need arises."

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A theory shared by many of today's economists and industrial consultants is that "crisis" or "critical" events of some kind prompted the union and plant management to totally reassess their approach. "A loss of production contracts, widespread and prolonged layoffs, a marked change in the competitive environment, obsolescence of the product line and the start-up of a new plant were the kind of events which produced the mutually expressed comment that business as usual wouldn't work anymore."

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These are probably accurate in the sense that each, general in nature, covers a wide range of the industrial work ethic.

It is true that in many businesses today we continue to structure work in worn-out ways. Supervisors trained in the more traditional mode of management tend to operate this way. Years of directing, controlling, overseeing and handling all the responsibilities connected with a production department make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do a complete about face. Habits die hard, particularly when at one time they were ingrained as a condition of employment!

It is no secret that the American industrial base is under siege. We are headed into an era of extremely aggressive competition which can no longer be ignored. Today's world is vastly different from that of our forefathers. Old need patterns have changed and creative thinking types of work can be done by many more people. "On a world wide basis, the automotive industry already has more productive capacity than it needs to meet market demand and overcapacity will soon be a fact of life in North America. With many more players now entering the game and building new productive facilities here on this continent, we're in a deadly game of musical chairs. When the music stops, one or more vehicle manufacturers could be left without a chair--and some of their employees without jobs."

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Competition is changing and in doing so, the structure of our industries' organization and management composition is also being forced to change. These changes, aimed at the very core of our supervisory traditions, must be given great consideration. In seeking to sharpen our competitive edge by reexamining all of our traditional ways of doing business we must be careful that the first-line supervisor, the heartbeat of the production system, is not ignored. The foreman, the "forgotten man" of industry has long since been regarded as expendable. If this continues in the future even greater problems will more than likely develop.

Past history has revealed that supervisory role difficulties have been manifested in many ways. Those who occupied the role often expressed dissatisfaction: high levels of ambiguity about their responsibilities and authority; complaints that they lacked either the skills or organizational support to do their jobs, and apparent disappointment that they personally did not get recognition for the accomplishments of their units commensurate with the effort they invested in the work.

"Role ambiguity and role conflict are part of every manager's life. Role ambiguity is the uncertainty about decisions and actions when guidelines are lacking or inconsistent with situational demands. Role conflict results from opposing pressures on the manager."

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It is difficult to describe the innermost feelings of first-line supervisors who are faced with working within a management structure that demands they change their traditional management style to that of "participative leader" when no clear cut policies have been provided.

Role difficulties are further aggravated by today's supervisor because they are obliged to "wear many hats." They must ensure that the assembly line meets schedules, that basic shop and safety rules are followed, and in the face of mechanical and tooling failures, foster a climate of trust and contentment among their employees. Social problems, employee

disagreements, deadline pressures and lack of consistent direction from upper management and union leadership all fuel the fire of discontent among floor level supervision.

"Current managerial ambiguity results from a gap between the requirements for current and future skills or knowledge. Uncertainty and ambiguity develop a form of trauma often resulting in a race between "retirement and obsolescence."

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It is this fear of obsolescence, or being put out to pasture at a pre-retirement age that terrifies today's supervisors.

"The WHY of Change"

"General Motors, the world's largest corporation, and many thousands of firms requiring similar job roles, are faced both with a hostile external and a hostile internal environment. Worldwide competition, aggressive labour unions, governmental control, and a society that questions the car's social desirability, even while buying more cars, are external forces impacting on management's strategic actions. At the same time, the behavior of employees at lower status levels thwart managements attempts at higher productivity. Lower levels of management, "supervisors"? also fail to find personal challenge and fulfillment, falling into a similar pattern of routine conformity, boredom, and largely cognitive-emotional disengagement."

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Problems facing our large industrial corporations today are bound to increase in the future. Daily newspapers across the country continue to hammer home that American industry is in serious trouble. It is no secret that our motor industry, particularly General Motors, is now operating under crisis management tactics. "Despite the success that had made it the worlds largest firm with a financial budget larger than any enterprise or government other than the US and the USSR, General Motors is having trouble adjusting to a transitional organizational mode. Its difficulties stem from the combined impact of technological, social-behavioral, and institutional-structure change."

GM's market share has steadily fallen from 45% in 1953 to 36% in 1988 and industry analysts predict that without drastic changes in both productivity, quality, and management reorganization, it will continue to plummet downward while import sales from foreign competitors, primarily Japan, will continue to grow.

Market share data for the past thirty-six years provided by the American News Market Data Book Issue below graphically illustrates trends in the market place.

MARKET SHARES FOR 36 YEARS - U.S. CAR REGISTRATIONS BY COMPANY

| Year | GM | FORD | CHRYSLER | AMC | STUDEBAKER- PACKARD | KAISER-FRASER WILLYS | MISC. DOMESTIC | IMPORTS |
|------|-------|-------|----------|-------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| 1953 | 45.07 | 25.15 | 20.31 | 3.55 | 4.05 | 1.34 | 0.02 | 0.51 |
| 1954 | 50.70 | 30.83 | 12.90 | 2.01 | 2.43 | 0.47 | 0.07 | 0.59 |
| 1955 | 50.76 | 27.63 | 16.82 | 1.81 | 2.06 | 0.10 | 0.01 | 0.81 |
| 1956 | 50.78 | 28.45 | 15.48 | 1.81 | 1.76 | ----- | 0.07 | 1.65 |
| 1957 | 44.85 | 30.39 | 18.33 | 1.77 | 1.13 | ----- | 0.07 | 3.46 |
| 1958 | 46.36 | 26.44 | 13.92 | 4.01 | 1.08 | ----- | 0.07 | 8.12 |
| 1959 | 42.10 | 28.12 | 11.30 | 6.01 | 2.21 | ----- | 0.09 | 10.17 |
| 1960 | 43.64 | 26.60 | 14.01 | 6.42 | 1.62 | ----- | 0.13 | 7.58 |
| 1961 | 46.53 | 28.53 | 10.79 | 6.33 | 1.23 | ----- | 0.12 | 6.47 |
| 1962 | 51.87 | 26.30 | 9.61 | 6.10 | 1.12 | ----- | 0.11 | 4.89 |
| 1963 | 51.04 | 24.87 | 12.37 | 5.67 | 0.85 | ----- | 0.10 | 5.10 |
| 1964 | 49.08 | 26.01 | 13.81 | 4.71 | 0.32 | ----- | 0.07 | 6.00 |
| 1965 | 50.07 | 25.47 | 14.67 | 3.49 | 0.13 | ----- | 0.06 | 6.11 |
| 1966 | 48.13 | 26.08 | 15.39 | 2.95 | 0.06 | ----- | 0.08 | 7.31 |
| 1967 | 49.53 | 22.15 | 16.05 | 2.85 | ----- | ----- | 0.10 | 9.32 |
| 1968 | 46.73 | 23.70 | 16.25 | 2.76 | ----- | ----- | 0.08 | 10.48 |
| 1969 | 46.79 | 24.25 | 15.12 | 2.54 | ----- | ----- | 0.06 | 11.24 |
| 1970 | 39.73 | 26.42 | 16.09 | 3.03 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 14.68 |
| 1971 | 45.16 | 23.52 | 13.71 | 2.50 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 15.06 |
| 1972 | 44.40 | 24.39 | 13.80 | 2.83 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 14.53 |
| 1973 | 44.32 | 23.50 | 13.33 | 3.45 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 15.15 |
| 1974 | 41.89 | 24.96 | 13.56 | 3.79 | ----- | ----- | 0.06 | 15.74 |
| 1975 | 43.31 | 23.06 | 11.70 | 3.72 | ----- | ----- | 0.04 | 18.17 |
| 1976 | 47.22 | 22.45 | 12.91 | 2.53 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 14.84 |
| 1977 | 46.37 | 22.66 | 10.97 | 1.69 | ----- | ----- | 0.04 | 18.26 |
| 1978 | 47.67 | 22.91 | 10.16 | 1.44 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 17.78 |
| 1979 | 46.42 | 20.29 | 9.02 | 1.52 | ----- | ----- | 0.05 | 22.70 |
| 1980 | 46.41 | 16.51 | 7.14 | 1.72 | ----- | ----- | 0.04 | 28.18 |
| 1981 | 44.50 | 16.32 | 8.76 | 1.58 | ----- | ----- | 0.04 | 28.80 |
| 1982 | 44.02 | 16.68 | 8.61 | 1.09 | ----- | ----- | 0.03 | 29.57 |
| 1983 | 44.01 | 17.11 | 9.19 | 2.14 | ----- | ----- | 0.01 | 27.54 |
| 1984 | 44.44 | 19.26 | 9.51 | 1.86 | ----- | ----- | 0.00 | 24.93 |
| 1985 | 42.83 | 18.86 | 11.23 | 1.18 | ----- | ----- | 0.00 | 25.90 |
| 1986 | 41.51 | 18.19 | 11.47 | 0.65 | ----- | ----- | 0.00 | 28.18 |
| 1987 | 36.70 | 20.33 | 10.77 | ----- | ----- | ----- | 0.00 | 32.23 |
| 1988 | 36.03 | 21.58 | 11.22 | ----- | ----- | ----- | 0.00 | 31.17 |

Beginning at the top of the graph, U.S. car makers, after combining G.M., Ford, Chrysler, AMC, Studebaker-Packard, Kaiser-Fraser Willys, and Misc. Domestic, made up for 99.49% of all car registered in the country. During this same year, 1953, only .51% of cars registered in the U.S. were built by foreign car makers.

In comparison to G.M.'s 9.04% loss, Ford, America's #2 automobile manufacturer had lost only 3.57%, the smallest loss of any domestic car maker.

Chrysler, after its bail-out of the ailing American Motors' Corporation, (3.55% in 1953 to 0.65% in 1986), had by 1988 dropped from 20.31% in 1953 to 11.22%, a loss even greater than G.M.

After 1955, Kaiser-Fraser Willys ceased to exist, while the import percentage had grown over 30% in a three-year period. (1953-56)

Studebaker-Packard, out of business by 1967, had lost ground steadily during otherwise prosperous years for U.S. car makers.

Interesting is the fact that since 1964 import makers have gained more and more market share while U.S. makers have lost. Import manufacturers have maintained a rate of growth from 0.51% in 1953 to 31.17% in 1988, a net gain of 30.66%, a figure greater than the combined loss of 30.43% of domestic manufacturing in the same 1953 to 1988 time period.

Additional information reveals that in sheer volume Japan and the United States were the world's top automobile producers in 1988. Viewing annual world vehicle production records from 1947 to the present reveals that the U.S. car manufacturers enjoyed the number one position far ahead of all other competitors until 1980.

Annual world vehicle production since World War II — 1988 output rises to 48.61 million

| Year | Canada | France | Germany | Italy | Japan | U.S. | U.S.S.R. | U.K. | Other | World Total |
|------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| 1947 | 330,300 | 300,100 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,100 | 3,000,000 | 2,111,019 | 12,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 512,101 | 24,000,000 |
| 1948 | 330,341 | 302,370 | 1,000,332 | 1,000,310 | 3,000,210 | 2,112,012 | 12,240,174 | 979,730 | 300,250 | 24,000,000 |
| 1949 | 302,347 | 290,310 | 1,000,300 | 1,000,300 | 3,000,300 | 2,112,012 | 12,250,017 | 979,730 | 300,300 | 24,000,000 |
| 1950 | 411,332 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1951 | 300,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1952 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1953 | 400,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1954 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1955 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1956 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1957 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1958 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1959 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1960 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1961 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1962 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1963 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1964 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1965 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1966 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1967 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1968 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1969 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1970 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1971 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1972 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1973 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1974 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1975 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1976 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1977 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1978 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1979 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1980 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1981 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1982 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1983 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1984 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1985 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1986 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1987 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |
| 1988 | 307,000 | 300,000 | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,112,000 | 12,271,000 | 979,000 | 300,000 | 24,000,000 |

NOTE: Totals may not add because of double-counting of O.D. and convertible production numbers in other countries.

SOURCE: Automotive News, 1989, and U.S. EPA.

Since 1980, Japanese car manufacturers have produced no less than 468,634 (1984) more cars than U.S. makers and reached an all time high of 3,198,795 (1981).

This year is of particular significance because it signals the turning point in American industrial thinking. In 1980 Japan produced 3032.51 more vehicles than G.M. For the first time in our history the U.S. industrial giants had been surpassed by an overseas competitor. It probably is no exaggeration to say that this realization sent many U.S. car manufacturers back to the drawing boards "quaking in their boots". The American manufacturing and production system was so traditionally entrenched in American thinking as to be compared to "baseball, mom, and apple pie". Afterall, the mass production assembly system had been invented on American soil. What better place to keep it! To be upstaged by anyone was unbelievable, to be outdone by offshore rivals unimaginable.

Most organizations initiate a change of this magnitude only in crisis, and often then only when it is a case of survival. "Successful change does not begin until strong environment pressures shake the power structure at its very foundation. Until the ground under the top managers begins to shift, it seems unlikely that they will be sufficiently aroused to see the need for change, both in themselves and the rest of the organization."

American industry is faced with the erosion of its financial base and is seeking to shift from traditional management styles to that of a more participatory type. It is this implication that affects the dramatic shift in attitude and role change of the first-line supervisor. As the thrust for change becomes greater, managerial roles will undergo a profound reshaping. A total restructuring of the work environment will need to take place if American industry is to survive into the decade of the 90's.

To say that American industry was caught unprepared is an understatement. "Conservative in design, they were so confident of their continuing success that surges in the marketplace were viewed as momentary. Afterall, they had been the "engines of the nations prosperity" so long that fundamental restructuring was unthinkable."

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It has proven to be fact, rather than hypothesis, that entire industries can be eliminated because of an unwillingness or inability to shift direction. This is especially true of mature industries which face significant losses in market share.

"Alleviating the Pain"

What can be done to lessen the blow that these changes force upon the floor level supervisors? If they are indeed the "backbone" of industry, what measures must be taken so that the transition from traditional management to the leader of the future can be made as expediently and painlessly as possible?

One of the most basic realizations industry must make today is to understand how it is changing and why the old mode of leadership no longer serves. We are living in an age where the rights of the individual are protected, where paternal protectors of the past appear patronizing and where promises for a brighter tomorrow are looked upon with suspicion and skepticism.

Changing economic and technological gains have changed the game from one that could be won by employing authoritative, non-arbitrary tactics to one that tomorrow will be won by new approaches to leadership and joint ventures between union and management.

Today the "sleeping giant" is on the threshold of awakening. Many efforts are now underway to build new corporate "cultures" that hopefully will generate better business results and provide greater job satisfaction than historically found in most U.S. organizations. Building a new culture will require that management create a new foundation for employee development at all levels.

It is not an easy task to accomplish. It will require that employees, both salary and hourly alike, understand completely the reasons for change, and how their roles and responsibilities will be transformed. A total and complete "buy-in" will be necessary for this to succeed.

Involving employees in the planning stages of the change, providing them with accurate and complete information, creating an atmosphere where they can air their opinions without fear of reprisal, and encouraging adequate training and motivational incentives can lessen the resistance to such momentous change.

"Any major change-whether its organizational, cultural, or technical-almost always takes longer and costs more than expected."

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American industry must be prepared for today's rapid change in its people and systems. Now more than ever there is a need to seize opportunities that can lead American industry back to greatness.

"The biggest challenge of the 1990's will not be finding ways to shut factories or replace people with machines; it will be finding ways to combine people and machines to achieve efficiencies that deliver the best product to our customers. That's a challenge that ultimately will benefit everyone, including the customer. And it should help grow the market share we're all competing for."

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First-line supervisors will play an important role in this transformation. Whether or not they choose to participate in the shift from the traditional foreman of yesteryear to the leader of tomorrow is examined in the following three sections.

FOOTNOTES

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"THE SUPERVISOR OF THE PAST"

BY-GONE DAYS UP THROUGH THE 1960'S

PART II

Today, over a million strong, supervisors carry out a management tradition that dates back hundreds of years.

Earlier peoples have always made things. In agricultural societies tasks were assigned according to their various skills by a chief selected from the other members of the group. Each person was responsible for pulling their own weight and the chief was present to make sure each did their job satisfactorily.

Differences among the members undoubtedly occurred and were, more than likely, settled in ways unique to that particular tribe. Obviously, the chief did not have to be concerned with such things as labor and material costs, but in all probability he ran up against tooling or equipment problems of some kind and had to deal with them in such a way as to keep the respect of the rest of the group. Failing to maintain order and the production of goods which then consisted mostly of food, shelter, clothing, weapons, and tools could lead to the banishment of the chief and the selection of another by disgruntled group members.

It is probable that these first advances in the earliest manufacturing practices resulted from the specialization of labor (job selection by skill) and this specialization of labor became a major milestone in man's progress towards civilization.

This method of work (groups under a chief or head man) was used for centuries without much change or refinement. There was no need for any change.

However, in the Middle Ages craft guilds or organized groups came into existence. As the agricultural economy gave way to the development of towns and cities, the specialization of talents and skills increased. Workers with well developed skills in building, weaving, metal-working or other handicrafts were able to devote all their time and efforts into their particular field. It is from these early master craftsmen that our present day trade journeymen developed. The carpenter, millwright, tanner, weaver, baker, and mechanic were all members of these early craft guilds. In time it became inevitable that these expert workers would decide to combine for mutual benefit and protection according to their distinctive craft. It was in the Middle Ages then, that these guilds became quite powerful and were able to exercise control over individual members and their products. These early craft guilds (Guild halls more than 500 years old can still be seen in England) can be considered the forerunners of today's labor unions.

The artisans of these craft guilds selected one of their group to "go to the fore" to represent the group with their masters and others. In fulfilling this leadership or representative role, the person selected became known as a "foreman."

"In Germany, the supervisor is still called a "vorarbeiter" ("foreworker"), in England the term "charge hand" is used. Both terms suggest the lead-person origin." 1

The term "supervisor" has its roots in Latin where it means "look over." It was originally applied to the master of a group of artisans. During the course of this paper the terms "foreman" and "supervisor" will be used interchangeably as both refer to any person with leadership responsibilities that place them in a position to direct the efforts of other people and to have responsible contact with the workforce on the one hand and management on the other.

The latter part of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th were great periods of growth for both the production of goods and employment.

Mass production stimulated mass sales and kept industrial employment at a high level. This growing workforce, therefore, required an increasing number of foremen.

Everyone, however, was not happy with the mass production methods being instituted in the larger shops. In the past, a single shoemaker had been responsible for making the shoes for an

entire village. With the beginning of the 20th century, as progressive assembly-line methods of passing the product from one specialized operation to another until completed became the norm, the skilled craftsmen became outraged. They could not compete with high speed machinery, nor the cheaper manufacturing costs associated with these intensified methods, and they attempted to stall this shift to high-volume production.

Masters of this particular vocation, the shoemaker, had lovingly crafted a shoe from beginning to end. Painstakingly cutting, sewing, and molding the leather into a fine piece of work provided the creator with a great source of satisfaction and pride. It was due to the organization strictly by craft rather than by steps in the production process that these early artisans were unable to assume the supervision and coordination of any kind of high-volume production. "As a result, they were replaced by foremen. In 1890, industry employed 90,000 foremen. By 1900, their ranks had swelled to 360,000." 2

The foreman's role during this time was primarily one of ensuring that the work assigned was accomplished in a timely manner. Physical size and strength were factors considered in their selection. They were usually chosen from the ranks primarily for their knowledge of the job and their ability to get the work accomplished. They were not necessarily the best liked, nor perhaps the most respected, but their responsibility and

authority were very clear. Demanding and inflexible, they functioned as policemen to the workers so that corners were not cut nor was time wasted. It was their responsibility to see that the job was done in the most expedient manner possible. If the current workforce wasn't satisfactory, the supervisor had the power to hire and fire at any given time.

At the time of the Industrial Revolution, supervision was mainly used to control machines and technical problems. People were secondary in the organizational system and administration procedures were fairly simple. A shared set of values designed to impose stability, order, and control began to dominate in organizations that spawned this new managerial class.

Earlier in this century, Frederick Taylor, often referred to as the "Father of Scientific Management" developed what he termed the "Principles of Scientific Management." Central to his theory was the belief that people's efforts could be manifested through the application of more systematic supervisory techniques. In his time these principles were apparently well received by existing management personnel as supervisors began to treat their subordinates more like well-oiled machines than as human beings. Management believed they had the sole responsibility to plan, implement, measure and control, and employees had only to perform the jobs laid out for them. Only a very small proportion of employees had creative, thinking kinds of jobs.

According to E.W. Brody in his book, "The Business of Public Relations", "Adaptability and change are not a major attribute of traditional twentieth-century organizations." 3 Frederick Taylor was certainly not alone in his thinking that work to be done should be analyzed and then arranged in simplified elements that could be professionally managed within a pyramidal organizational structure. Henry Ford, credited with the creation of the first automated assembly line, and after him, Alfred P. Sloan Jr. (General Motors President 1937-1952), agreed upon these primary components of traditional management style:

- "1. Work must be specialized according to function.
2. Individual accountability must be established by written rules and regulations.
3. Rigid control must be maintained through hierarchical structure and controlling traditionally involves monitoring performance and correcting deviation." 4

The managers that accepted the philosophies above of Taylor and others like him began to dominate in the most prominent of 20th century organizations. They viewed management as both a science and a self-reflection that affected the way Americans were to view themselves and big business for the next 70 years.

Organizations that survived and thrived emphasized profitability via efficiency and diversity of assets rather than concentrating on any one product, market, or business. The push toward greater "efficiency" implied minimizing organizational input in relation to output which in turn led to the standardization of work processes and gradually the lack of individual identity among the workforce's skills, appearance, and behavior. From management's point of view each worker was exactly like the person on either side of them, doing exactly the same job, in exactly the same manner.

Managers dictated to the millions of unorganized wage-earners and gave them little or no say in their jobs or the company's future.

Traditional management styles teach supervisors to control, rather than understand or support their people. The traditional or authoritarian foreman of the 1920's and early 1930's did not permit subordinates to question orders or take independent action. Little or no consideration was given to people or their problems. Decisions, right or wrong, good or bad, were railroaded through. Production objectives were achieved as long as the foreman was present to observe, control, and personally direct all activity. The old style foreman had to constantly supervise with his only influence being his formal authority.

By the same token, in this type of environment, employees often exhibited minimal work effort. Production oriented rather than people oriented, the setting was perfect for the "old, bull-of-the-woods foreman who stalked up and down the line, berating workers for omitting a bolt or failing to tighten a screw." 5 Hard nosed, loud-mouthed disciplinarians, these early foremen manipulated employees by threats and intimidation.

Historically, traditional management has assumed that employment is simply a means of producing income which can then be spent to satisfy personal objectives, and the substance of work is irrelevant. If the work is irrelevant, then, so must be those performing the work if production of the final product is the only goal. "Traditional managerial wisdom has asserted, don't get too close to your people, or they will take advantage of you." 6

Focusing on short-term gains, traditional management believes that the ideal organization is orderly and stable. Thus, we have the hard-driving, cigar smoking foreman of the late 20's and 30's who pushed their employees to the point of exhaustion and then dealt with them in often cruel and inhumane ways.

"In the 1930's, a time when only company owners and managers prospered, upwardly mobile white-collar workers were

ideal managerial material. The managerial class mushroomed from the 1940's on. By 1950 the ratio of executives to employees in mostly large companies had increased from 1 per 100 to 1 per 35. For example, in 1923, Swift and Company, the largest meat-packing concern, employed 50,000 workers and 500 executives. By 1950, the number of workers had grown by 50 percent to 75,000; the managerial ranks had swelled by 400 percent to 2,150." 7

The average workers, however, remained powerless during these early years. An over abundance of labor, both immigrants and native U.S. citizens, eagerly waited in long lines day after day for their name to be called for possible employment.

Over the years, as companies grew so did the deficiencies in the foremen's on-the-job knowledge. Combined with their lack of respect for the worker and their tendency to abuse the power of their position, the effectiveness of high-volume production methods began to deteriorate.

The first-line supervisor has always played a crucial role in the production process and come under intense pressure from above and below.

Identified as the managerial representative who "controlled workers" with the power to hire, fire, and mete out discipline, they had a standard response to sloppy assembly work: " They would summon the worker to a disciplinary hearing that usually

ended in a reprimand, suspension, or even discharge for the worker." 8 The reason for the poor workmanship was never discussed. It was as simple as that. The foreman had the first and always the last word.

The old time foreman ran his department single-handedly. He scheduled and inspected work and determined who would get which job depending on whether or not you were one of his favorites. If the foreman did not like an employee, they were assigned to one of the dirtiest and hardest jobs in the department.

The foreman of the early 1930's had no union to deal with, and had few company rules and regulations to follow. There was little or no competition to be concerned about as each supervisor was able to manage his own little "empire" pretty much any way he wanted, and unfortunately, many did just that at the expense of the worker. Immense corporate growth made the supervisor a low-level authoritarian bureaucrat and many became caught up in the race to not only get the parts out the door and keep their department in tip-top working order but also create a positive and visible image for themselves to their superiors. Favoritism played a big part in job assignment on both sides of the fence—management and hourly workers. Job selection depended a great deal upon who you knew rather than what you knew.

Long hours, unfair labor practices, unsafe equipment and harsh management methods would probably have remained the same throughout the latter 1930's and into the 1940's had not a momentous event occurred that changed the course of American Labor history.

On December 30, 1937, automotive workers in Flint, Michigan, decided that they had had enough and staged a walk-out of General Motors prompting what is now the infamous "Sit-Down Strike of 1937."

Much of the following information was taken from the 50th Anniversary Sit-Down Strike Commemorative Calendar, pub. in 1987, produced by union labor in the State of Michigan, Union Printing Co, Inc., 1753-59, N. Saginaw St., Flint, Michigan. It should, therefore, be read with this understanding.

Up to this point, the supervisor has been described in very negative terms. To be sure, a great many of them employed cold-hearted often harsh tactics to get the job done. What should be remembered, however, that along with the hundreds of men waiting in lines outside for hourly jobs were equal numbers of men hoping to get a chance at a foreman's job. It was not unusual to see lines and lines of men around a plant waiting for someone to quit, be fired, or injured so they could take their place. In these days it was not much better for supervision. They could also be replaced within a short period of time.

Working conditions for the autoworker in the mid-1930's were very difficult and at best unpredictable. Workers were cut, maimed, or disabled and lost their jobs when they could no longer keep up with the speed of the line or came under managements wrath. Insensitive to the plight of the workers, the corporation continued to push for longer working hours and higher production numbers. Workers who could not keep up with the pace were grabbed by the nape of the neck and dragged to the factory windows and forced to look down on the lines of unemployed people waiting to take their place.

Few women worked in the factories during these early years and those that did were often taunted by employees and supervisors alike who promised them a better job in return for sexual favors.

It was reported that between January 1, 1934 and July 31, 1936, General Motors spent almost \$900,000 to retain twenty-one spy agencies to report on union sympathizers and discontented employees. Anyone suspected of being in support of union organization was threatened, bullied, or even worse, beat up. Thugs, and "company goons" were hired to keep the union from trying to organize the workers in large numbers. Desperate and determined to gain union representation, Flint autoworkers continued to sign up secretly in large numbers.

At the same time, the Corporation spies had alerted Fisher Body's main office that with as many employees signing up a strike could occur at any time. Just a week earlier, on Dec. 24, 1936, the U.A.W. had won a contract at Detroit's Kelsey-Hayes Wheel manufacturing plant following a sit-down strike. Pay increases and equal pay for women doing the same work were gained in this contract and word of this had spread to the Flint complexes.

Fear of a similar strike now prompted the Corporation to plan the removal of key dies from Fisher Body Plant 1. However, this plan was discovered by unionized employees and on December 30, 1936, the workers sat down. The strike soon spread to Fisher Body Plant 2 which was then located in the Chevrolet manufacturing complex on Chevrolet Ave. across from Plants #4 and #5.

The ultimate goal of the strike was to occupy Plant 4 - the Chevrolet Engine plant which supplied motors for all Chevrolets produced in the U.S. When diversionary methods led to this on February 1, 1937, G.M. was virtually immobilized.

Much has been written about the events that took place during the next 44 days and the key roles played by both hourly and salaried workers. Recollections of actual participants of the 1937 strike on the following pages provide first-hand information of what the early foreman were really like and the

relationships they had with their employees. Vivid memories of shop floor conditions and labor-management practices came to life as each former G.M. employe told their side of the story. The first and third are told from the viewpoint of retired salaried employees while the second and fourth are from retired hourly workers. Interesting is the fact that the first and second people interviewed are brothers who saw things very differently. Opposing opinions on issues and policies became evident as each interview went along and are captured here. Actual wording has not been changed or altered in any way. Their exact comments appear in this paper.

On February 11, 1937, the G.M. Corporation sat down with the U.A.W. and recognized it as the collective bargaining agency of those employees who were members of the union. In this first contract, the Corporation stated that with this recognition, it would not interfere with the rights of the employees to be members of the union and that there would be no discrimination, interference, restraint or coercion by the Corporation or any of its agents against any employee because of membership in the union.

Up until 1954, membership in the union was not necessary for employment (open shops were the norm). It was not until after this date that membership became mandatory (closed shop) and employees no longer had a choice whether or not they wished to become union members.

WILLIAM T. CONNOLLY
(GENERAL MOTORS 1934-1976)

(Former Committeeman, Shop Committeeman, Vice-President and
President of Local 598 - 1947-1948)

Interviewed on April 9, 1990 (Actual words of retiree)

"I sat down. Well, things weren't too rough for me but I was always watching. When I joined the union I was a stockboy. I delivered stock to the line. There was no union at all back in 1935, not until 1936. In fact, we were forbidden to join any union at all."

We had to run up the hill to join the union and wear our button in our pocket. If the boss saw a button, you were finished."

"I joined the union because I was mad. I saw a little old man who couldn't keep up on the job grabbed by the scruff of the neck by the boss, taken over by the windows, and told, "See those guys down there? They're waiting for your job. If you don't get your a-- back on that line and get those parts, one of those guys is going to get it." He went back to the line with tears in his eyes and all the other guys helped him out and made his work easier. He kept up for a while but finally they got rid of him."

"The majority of the supervisors weren't like that but quite a few were. Like I said, you could be fired for wearing a union button. After I saw how that old man was treated, I ran up the hill the very next day and bought my union button. There was a table in the corner of the lunch room and you could sign up there. Pinkerton people were working in the plants undercover and if they pointed you out as an organizer or something you were done. That's the trouble with no union, you had nobody to talk to. If the foreman said that the guy's no good, he's lazy, or anything else he didn't like about someone, he'd fire them. Well, where does a guy go?"

"Over the years I got elected as a Committeeman, Shop Committeeman, and eventually Vice-President and then President of Local 598. I saw it all."

"The day of the strike we all sat down. I was right beside the line where my job was. We were told to sit there and stay there. The boss came down to me after we struck and told me to start the line. I said, "No, I'm on strike." He said it again, "Start your job." Well, I said, "I'm on strike." He said, "You're fired." I said, "No I'm not. I'm on strike." I sat there and then there was a big hullabaloo about that but I didn't listen to them. Pretty soon the plant shut down and the guys said for everybody to go home. Well, I had orders to stay

put and sit down so I said, "No way. I'm staying right here."

So we made a kitchen in the lunchroom and my wife and my brothers brought us food in. My father was a Safety Representative in the plant then and he told me, "If you don't get out of that plant we're going to come down and shoot you out of there." I said to him, "No you won't. You did what you thought was right and lived your life the way you wanted to so move over and let me live my life the way I want to."

"About 400 of us were there that first day but slowly they thinned out. The worst day had about 60 of us left. I had sneaked out a couple of times and sneaked back in. Me and my buddy would run to the fire escape, climb down the ladder and run like hell across the lumber yard in a race with the police who were chasing us. I'd climb the fence and go home for the night. The next morning, before daylight, and after breakfast with my family, I'd sneak back in. My buddy and I had a signal with flashlights and he'd pull me back up when he saw my light flash on and off."

"We were in there for 44 days. We weren't able to sneak out after the National Guard got there. After the Battle of Running Bulls, they were sent in by the Governor Frank Murphy to be sure that nobody would get hurt and any more property would be damaged. They were there to maintain the status quo and they'd shoot you."

"Nobody went in and out and I had to stay in after this. About 200 of us were inside then. We all made billy clubs out of whatever we could get. Mine was made of two lead pipes taped together. I was assigned to guard the front door of my plant. A lot of the guys were up on the roof and at the windows. At the front door I saw the police coming from across Chevrolet Plant #2 so I put both slugs through the door handles and put my feet up against the door posts. I was suspended in mid-air. The cop came along and put the butt of his pistol through the window and put the muzzle through there next. The muzzle looked really big, probably because I was scared. It was a tear gas gun and I held on. I said to myself, "A policeman wouldn't shoot a taxpayer on strike." But he let it go and the flame from it burned all the hair on the left side of my head, my eyelashes, my eyebrows, and my whiskers because I kept hanging on. I didn't think he'd shoot but he did."

"At the Battle of Running Bulls, the police had tried to drive us out with tear gas. I heard of a man being shot four times in the stomach with a rifle but it was second hand so I'm not sure."

"I got involved with the committee in 1938 but you still didn't have to join the union. I retired as a common worker. My relations with the supervisors were pretty good. They respected

me and I respected them. The kind of foremen that had worked their way up from the ranks were the ones we respected but the foremen who came down from Timbuktoo as somebody's cousin and never knew the job and didn't know anything were the ones we resented. One time, one of these foremen came up to me and said, "Bill, I want you to do this job this way." So I said to him, "Okay, you show me." He said, "You know right well I can't do that." So I said to him, "Then what are you telling me for? I can do it and I'm going to do it my way." That was the last I heard from him."

"We had a lot of grievances in the 40's and 50's. Most of them were about speed-ups and intimidations. Mostly speed-ups."

"We had about 40 women in the cushion room who were stuffers and sewers for the seats. That's all the women we had back then. We had no female supervisors at all before I retired and Fisher Body had only one black man as a supervisor in the entire plant then."

"In the days before the union in our plant, if a guy had a son who didn't have a job, he'd go fire someone and then give his son that person's job. You had no place to go. No recourse."

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

It is ironic that two brothers, raised with the same set of values and background, should ultimately end up on such opposite sides of the fence.

John Connolly, a tough conservative member of management and William Connolly, a union activist and eventually union local officer. Stating that he originally joined the union because he saw how unfairly a "little old man" was treated by management is the opposite of what his brother saw in managements treatment of the employees. Each looked upon this issue in a very way. One, William saw management as bullying and unfair, while John viewed management as treating people fairly and giving them a chance.

A person of strong principle, William believed that the union was there to protect peoples rights. A person could be fired for no reason other than the foreman didn't particularly like him or had some relative that needed a job. (An instance of who you know rather than what you know?)

Unafraid to stand-up to his family, police, and the National Guard for something he felt so strongly about he was willing to defend his principles even to the point of physical violence. The strong emotional ties that bind union members together, as

union brothers and sisters, was born during this 44 day period. Undeterred by threat and even tear gas, they remained locked behind the plant doors waiting for management to give in.

The comments that there were two kinds of supervisor's supports some earlier discussion. Both were obviously viewed quite differently by the employees on the floor. It was much easier to respect the supervisor's who had "earned" the job and knew what was going on than someone's son off of the streets who didn't know anything at all but pretended they did.

From his comments it seems that management and union relations began to gradually improve. Mutual respect from each side for a job well done seemed to soothe much of the bitter feeling felt during the early years.

ARTHUR C. SLY
(GENERAL MOTORS 1927-1965)

Interviewed on April 16, 1990 (Actual words of retiree)

"I hired into Chevrolet as a regular worker on a line. I was twenty-two when I first went to work for General Motors. Later I worked as a grinder on the valve jobs, and then as a supervisor on the valves because by then I knew so much about them nobody could pull anything over on me."

"During the sit-down strike, I was working over in Plant 5. There was a tunnel that went under Chevrolet Ave. between Plants 4 and 5 and we could get parts and people through this when the strike first started. At least until they blocked it off. During the strike all the superintendents and officials were locked up in their offices and people watched them to make sure they couldn't get out for help. When the strike first started we all sat down and did what we were told to do but pretty soon we figured out that it wasn't our plant that they really wanted."

"During the Battle of Running Bulls we watched from the windows while the police cars were turned over and the fire hoses were turned on. Those guys on the hoses had pretty good aims and knocked a lot of the company men and police on the ground. All of us were throwing anything we could get our hands on out of the windows at the police. A lot of people got hurt with door hinges

and pieces of frames and hoods flying everywhere. I remember looking out in the street and seeing a real mess by the time it was over. We all watched as the police tried to stop the riot but couldn't do much because there were so many more of us than them."

"After the battle, I was able to come and go in and out of my plant but instead ran food back and forth to the strikers out at Fisher I. We were allowed to get as far as the windows and pass food through but we had to get out of there quick after the food and supplies made it through the windows. It was pretty bad for those people in there during the strike but we tried to help them as best as we could."

"When the war broke out I was twenty-eight. I signed up and went to Grand Rapids for my physical but never got called up. I guess I was too old and they wanted the younger guys. Anyway, I was glad that I never had given my job up like some of the other men did and had a job to go back to. They asked me to go on supervision when most of the younger foremen went into the service. I stayed on after the war was over and most of them came back. I never went back on as a production worker and retired as a supervisor."

"We had a lot of women working for us during the war because of the shortage of men. They could do a lot better than the men on the grinder jobs because their hands were smaller and they could handle the smaller parts and were more accurate. They did a good job and you just had to tell them what you wanted and they got the parts just about perfect."

"Years ago it was pretty rough working in the plant. A lot of the men complained about the machines not being safe and the oil and dirt on the floor. The supervisors back then were a lot tougher than they are now. When they told us to do something nobody argued with them. We just did it. I tried to be fair with the men I had working for me. I worked in the same area for a long time and knew most of the jobs better than anyone else there so no one tried to tell me something was wrong when it wasn't. I remember that there were some foremen you just didn't mess with. These were the ones that were really a lot harder than they probably had to be. I think I was a lot fairer with the men working for me than a lot of them were."

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Because Arthur Sly hired into the shop as an hourly worker and gained a great deal of floor experience before he went on supervision, he was able to see that there are two sides to every issue. Also, the fact that he worked in the same area for an extremely long period of time helped him in many ways. He could assist an employee when they were experiencing mechanical difficulties and could be sympathetic when they became frustrated when something just wouldn't work right. Secondly, because everyone knew he was so well-acquainted with the equipment, people were hesitant to try any tricks on him they may have on a younger, inexperienced foreman.

A union sympathizer prior to the strike and an active participant during the 44 days the plants were shut-down, Arthur supported the fight for better working conditions and for fair labor practices in the plant.

He was instrumental in seeing that the strikers locked inside the plants had enough food to eat to keep the fight going.

Because of his age he never had to serve in the war like most of the younger supervisors who evidently had little or no hourly time and were inducted. Apparently a good worker, he was asked to go on supervision most likely because of his floor experience. Interestingly enough, he never went back to

production worker status. In his case, he was able to use the skills developed on the floor as an hourly employe to benefit both himself and the company.

A production supervisor during the war, he experienced the influx of women into the workforce. His statement that "you just had to tell them what you wanted" has two possible meanings. One, the women were given their instructions and no questions were tolerated, or secondly, on a more positive note, the women did an exceptional job and were dependable and accurate.

He also saw the differences in the foremen and felt that some were much harsher than necessary. Maybe because he had been on the receiving end of an irrate supervisor's wrath in his early days, he could now feel for the employe.

WILBERT J. PAYNE
(GENERAL MOTORS 1941-1974)

Interviewed on April 18, 1990 (Actual words of retiree)

"I hired into A.C. in 1941 when I was twenty-six years old. I'd been working all my life at different jobs and got hired into A.C. on sanitation. When I hired in there were only twenty blacks in the entire plant, including me. All of us were on sanitation jobs as janitors. I was one of the first black men that got onto jobsetting but that wasn't until a lot later."

"I was a group leader of a sanitation department and had to make sure that all the janitors did the jobs they were supposed to do. At one time I was an aisle painter, painting lines down the middle of the plant. I'd been painting since I was ten years old and well, they wanted lines painted down the aisle so I painted them. I remember that I'd been painting for awhile when I heard that skilled trades were complaining about me. They said I was taking their job. I'd painted all my life but they said that it didn't matter so after that I never painted another line."

"One time three of us blacks were transferred over to another department. We moved around wherever they needed us to go and they wanted some machines run in another area. The other men had been there for a long time and they didn't like us being

there and told the foreman that they were going to walk out.

Well, the foreman told the superintendent what they were going to do. The superintendent ended up coming out to the department and told them, "Go ahead, walk out. These men are going to stay here and we'll find somebody else who will do your jobs." We never had a problem with those men again and after awhile we worked together pretty well."

"I got along with everybody good because I didn't bother too much with anybody. I stayed to myself and did my job. I didn't cause the foremen any problems and they left me alone. I never gave anybody a reason to bother me back."

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

The importance of this interview lies in the realization that the first blacks were hired primarily as janitors and sanitation workers. It wasn't until much later that they entered into higher paying non-interchangeable work groups.

Significant here is that regardless of past experience, such as in Wilbert Payne's case, who had "been painting since he was ten years old", blacks were not allowed to perform work tasks previously assigned to another trade.

Wilbert Payne is a good example of an employee who did his job well and went out of his way to avoid problems and make an issue of anything he disagreed about.

Apparently he proved himself a dependable employee, along with two other blacks, because the superintendent spoke up for them and resolved the problem between them and the rest of the department. Important here is that what began as a racial issue was ultimately settled on the basis of work competency rather than color.

JOHN CONNOLLY
(GENERAL MOTORS 1931-1974)

Interviewed on April 9, 1990 (Actual words of retiree)

"I was a toolmaker. I came from Massachusetts and hired into Chevy in the toolroom as a toolmaker. The day of the strike I went to Marshall, Michigan, to make parts for a Ford plant and didn't come back until after the strike was over."

"I went on supervision in 1943 during the war. I was a toolmaker on inspection and worked on jet parts. Most of the toolroom supervisors were from Scotland and had been working for the General Electric plant in Lynn, Massachusetts, before coming to G.M. As a matter of fact, 90% of the toolmakers were from G.E. because they had the largest apprentice program in the country. Many of the foremen who had been toolmakers had also come from the east. Most of them came up through the ranks. A few came in on salary jobs. My father came in as a safety engineer from the east, Andover, Massachusetts. Chevy recruited from the east because of the extensive skilled trades' numbers and backgrounds."

"Depending on the department determined how many people you had working for you. If you built motors, you had connecting rods, two for each six cylinder engines. You sometimes had two foremen and one general foreman in one area."

"As far as discipline went, I was tough. I never penalized anybody. I let them earn it. When a committeeman came to me and said, "Jack, why are you penalizing him?" I always said, "I'm not penalizing him. I'm giving him what he earned." If I put him on the street, well, I believe in hitting them in the pocketbook."

"I'm seventy-six and have been out for sixteen years. Things are only as bad as you let them be. If you go by and see guys violating shop rules you acquiesce by your silence. I was observing. My job was not to find fault. I was responsible for machine repair in five plants and had foremen and general foremen in every plant. I retired as superintendent of machine repair. I had oilers, toolmakers, and die makers."

"I was fair but I was doing what I was getting paid to do. You have to do what you get paid to do. I had foremen that were deadbeats too. I had a general foreman once, I'd get him in the office, give him a pep talk, he'd spit on his hands, and I'd say, "Well, you just put on a fine show but I know that you're going to go back out there and do just what you've been doing all along."

"The name of the game is to get the job done. I went to the umpire several times and beat em'. I kept records of everything that a supervisor that wasn't any good did. When I got on the witness stand I told it like it was. A lot of them new foremen we got in the 60's were part-time GMI students and weren't any good. I won so many. If a person wasn't worth a d--- he didn't get a raise."

"As far as conditions in the plant went, well, in the old days a supervisor wasn't allowed to have coffee. In those days we came to work. The IMA had a store in the dining hall. One on each side. You couldn't go out there until your lunch time. If you had a thermos bottle you could drink it but it wasn't authorized. You just didn't walk around with your cup of coffee or set it out and eat a sandwich. And number two, you didn't get washed up before lunch and you didn't wash up before you went home. In the old days we used to get them out of the restrooms by going in after them and saying, "Hey, you on the third stool, get out. You've been in there long enough!" Then we'd drag them out."

"During World War II we were the finest toolroom in the world. We had German toolmakers working for us that had said that they had never seen toolmakers like us. After World War II, I inherited the toolroom and machine repair. They all had

chairs. Well, we'd had chairs before because as toolmakers we needed them for our layout work but the toolroom had never had any chairs; most of the rest of us had to stand or lean against a machine. I remember looking back at how the machine repair guys were always sitting and laying way back so I got all the foremen in the office and said, "I want you to go out there on the floor and cut the backs off all the chairs. I don't want a chair out there with a back on it." We cut the back off every chair in the place. I said that those guys are going to lean over and break their necks."

"Back in the 40's when I was on the aviation job I got thirty women. They came from all over. Some were young girls. They were all inspectors. We were building something we knew nothing about so they figured we could use skilled tradesmen to rationalize and hammer out the problems. Those women gave me the biggest trouble I ever had. All the women did the same job and had the same classification. Each girl inspected something different on the aviation line, something like spark plug holes. We had good attendance and only had to let a few go."

"In 1967 we had the first women on skilled trades. Personnel hired girls ninety-five to one hundred pounds for machine repair and physically they couldn't handle the job. We got stuck with a lot of them."

"Blacks didn't come on to skilled trades until the early 1960's."

"Here's an instance for you. One day I saw the sweeper leaning on his broom and the foreman came along and said he was asleep and fired him. No where to go. You don't have anybody. You're just fired. Years ago my father saw three guys sitting by the bench by the dock at the east end of Plant #4. He went to the superintendent and told him that he had seen these three guys sitting by the dock and asked him what he thought they were doing. The superintendent said to him, "Oh yeah, I fired them." My father asked him, "Well, why don't they go?" and he replied back that, "They can't go until I give them their slip and I'm not giving it to them until quitting time." If they didn't wait to get the slip then they couldn't get the pay they'd earned."

"At the Battle of the Running Bulls there were union people all over and the policemen and sheriff department came down in mass. The people turned over the police cars and the police took off on the "run". That's where the name came from. It was a real riot and that's what brought the National Guard to Flint. The police had lost all control."

"Until college grads came in, I can remember that every foreman, general foreman, and superintendent in the motor plant came up from the ranks. They all came up and all knew their job. You couldn't fool any of them."

"What brought on the union was one on one. If I didn't like you, you were out. You had no recourse. The supervisors were a powerful group back then. The supervisors had stool pigeons that would get information for them. He'd give the ones he liked the most overtime and the best jobs. Even if another guy knew the job better the one he liked would get the extra overtime."

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Hiring in prior to the labor movement and moving up through the prestigious skilled trades ranks, John Connolly is a living example of the "traditional" style of manager.

Fortunate to have other options available to him other than union involvement because of his skilled trades background, he was able to attain higher career levels than the majority of people of that same era.

He himself stated that he was a tough disciplinarian and felt that people got just what they deserved. Believing that the only way to correct poor work habits and unacceptable behavior was through disciplinary action (unpaid time off, discharge, etc.) show his use of early traditional management tactics.

Two sets of rules (?) may be evidenced by the fact that while he felt comfortable penalizing hourly employees, deadbeat general foremen remained untouched. The equal treatment of all employees, union or management, remains the issue here.

His descriptions of past rules and regulations (coffee breaks, lunch, wash up time) offered good insight into these early days.

Genuine pride in the toolroom as being the best in the world also came out loud and clear.

The now comical, but obviously traditional management approach to problem resolution, incident of cutting the backs off the machine repairmen's chairs further supports the contention that he was an old traditional style supervisor.

The introduction of women into the industrial workforce in the 1940's posed another set of problems for the supervisor's. The women generally had good attendance, were industrious workers, and could handle small delicate parts but had problems men didn't have. Dealing with women nauseated from pregnancies, experiencing menstrual cramping, and worrying about sick children at home disrupted the normal flow of production and went beyond the supervisor's regular job assignment.

Undeniably, favoritism was a method used in these early days. People were chosen on the basis of who they knew rather than what they knew. (A precedent still in effect today?)

The first agreement between G.M. and the U.A.W. served as the building block for later contracts which would become more specific in job content, worker rights, safety practices, benefits, etc. This first contract, signed on March 12, 1937, guaranteed the workers the right to join a union for representation purposes but little more. It was to remain much the same for the next few years while the union was in its infancy stage.

The important role played by the supervisor in the years prior to the events that led up to the strike and those immediately following cannot be underestimated. The harsh, discriminating methods used by these foremen were a major factor leading up to employee discontent and eventual unionization. Their unfair treatment of both men and women alike caused employees to be disgruntled and dissatisfied with their current status. Many viewed the union as their champion and savior leading them out of darkness into some kind of promised land where all their problems would be solved. To be sure, many were resolved, many more, however, were not.

Many supervisors continued to act primarily the same after the strike as they had before with the exception that now their actions were observed and reported upon, and, with unionization in the mass production industries, their powers to hire and fire had been stripped away. Basic supervisory styles, however, remained pretty much identical to pre-contract years.

Authoritative in nature, they continued to feel that employees were not to be trusted and must be told what to do and trained how to do it. Appropriate measurements then must be made to assure that they had completed the assigned task properly. What remained was a lot of "gray area" for individual interpretation of contractual items, which was exactly what took place. Foremen continued to be allowed to run their areas as long as they stayed within a certain prescribed area. What is important to remember is that foremen working in the industrial plants during this era were really in a precarious position. Caught between labor and management, they were often referred to as "the man in the middle." Their distrust of the hourly worker understandably created resentment, disinterest in the work performed, and wasted a great deal of the talent and expertise of the people on the floor who otherwise could have used their minds as well as their hands. Likewise, they felt that upper management really offered them little incentive as often they were left out of the decision making processes altogether. Evidence of supervisor dissatisfaction during the 1940's surfaced with a substantial rise in the number of foremen's unions. In 1945, the most notable of them, the Foreman's Association of America, (FAA), had a membership of 40,000 consisting of 240 chapters in 24 states. These foremen, unhappy in their jobs, consistently blamed upper management for their lack of authority equal to the

amount of responsibility placed upon them, the vague or non-existent chain of command to their immediate boss, and the lack of proper training in dealing with people, safety and production, and basic company policies.

"It was this lack of identity that drove the supervisors into the union ranks during these years and it was not until the passage of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act which defined supervisors as essentially managerial members that the unionization campaign of the 1940's collapsed." 9 Efforts on the part of foremen to unionize prior to the Taft-Hartley Act had, at Ford Motor Co, as described below, been realized.

Packard Motor Co.'s 666 out of 1200 foremen had voted to be represented by the fast growing FAA. Packard management retaliated by stating that foremen, being supervisory workers, were not specifically covered by the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, and announced that men who joined the FAA would be dropped from foremen's work. On the other hand, Ford Motor Co. had signed a contract with FAA members in 1945 to hopefully resolve differences between foremen and top management. Their contract established a grievance procedure, stipulated that seniority should be employed in promotion or demotion "if ability is equal", set-up a minimum wage differential between foremen and their subordinates, regulated overtime pay, sick leaves, and other leaves of absence. While

not industry wide, it was an attempt by Ford to satisfy their foremen and maintain the high level of experience on the factory floor.

At the same time, G.M., which then operated plants in many of the twenty-four states where FAA locals were chartered, paid for advertisements to woo foremen away from the union.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the industry spread the word that if the FAA persisted, its members would become "straw bosses" and a new category of "super foremen" would take over their work. This would put the current foreman literally out of work as their managerial powers would be taken from them and granted to a replacement.

Passage of the 1947 law defining the foreman as a member of the management team has quelled any highly successful attempts on unionization of the salary workforce up to the present. To be sure, some efforts have been made as recently as the mid 1980's to incorporate salary workers into some branch of the U.A.W. but only in small specific classifications (clerical workers, support groups and personnel).

Since the World War II era, considerably more attention has been given to the use of carefully considered management philosophies in the selection and training of foremen. The foreman of the early 1950's joined the management ranks at a time when management thought was moving more into human relations or

"people orientation." Along with this movement came the introduction of fringe benefits and the improvement of job conditions. People began to assume a different place in the management framework. It was also a time when more rules, regulations and company policies came about. Job content and responsibilities expanded a great deal and began to overlap one another.

The role of the foreman understandably changed also at this time, from both a technological and social point of view. A close examination of the roles and responsibilities of the foreman revealed that social change did not change his overall responsibilities. These social changes did, however, emphasize his "people" responsibilities.

This is certainly not to give the impression that traditional management operating styles no longer continued to be the norm. Supervisors now began to combine what they termed "human" management practices with traditional methods for getting the job done. Supervisors continued to control their people with machines, job specialization, and measured rewards. Lacking vision and initiative, they hid their fear of failure from their employees and upper-management as their job duties continued to expand.

The foremen of the 50's and 60's continued to operate under a fear/defense management style thereby creating their own reward and punishment system that tended to be reactive rather than proactive. These foremen continued to train and "overmanage" their people and intervene when something did not turn out as planned. Employees were subjected to regimentation and control by others and allowed no opportunity to think for themselves. Creativity on the part of the production worker was certainly not encouraged because this did not conform to approved company policies and procedures.

These decades were important years of growth and development for both management and the union. Vast technological advances, increasing market share, and expanding union contracts had a profound effect on the working relationship between supervision and employees. Foreman not only found their job responsibilities doubling as the corporations policies and procedures increased, but also the guidelines (contract) within which they had to operate.

In the old days the foreman's job had consisted of three major functions: planning, directing, and controlling. Simple and basic, it was much easier to operate in an environment where there were few interruptions from the outside. Things, however, had changed drastically with the introduction of organized labor. Supervisors now had a contract to abide by and negotiated agreements that had to be honored.

The primary responsibility of the first-line foreman remained the successful supervision of people to attain whatever goal that had been set for a particular area. Foremen gradually took on the role of the stockholders frontline representative. Upon their shoulders rested the task of getting a return on company investments resulting from the plans, calculations, and decisions of upper-management from the plant manager down. They had the responsibility of manipulating the services of others to provide the environment in which their group could meet production goals.

He became the link between his department and the supporting groups such as maintenance, the toolroom, and production control. Using production schedules and labor standards, he assumed the responsibility for setting head count requirements not only in the number of workers but also according to job classification.

Now responsible for the success of labor relations policies, he managed his personnel according to current contract provisions.

The foreman's role also expanded into the engineering field during these years. It became his responsibility for using materials specified in the design, and ensuring that his employees followed the process specifications layed out in the provided material and job description.

One of the most important added responsibilities placed upon the foremen during these years was the orienting and training of their employees. Prior to this, the foreman would assign one of their best men the responsibility of working with the new hire and hold him accountable for his performance. Contract stipulations changed this, and shifted the weight of responsibility to the side of management.

Becoming more and more cost-minded, the foremen began to understand the need for cost savings and look for areas where savings could be realized and keep their area within its budgetary allowance. It became increasingly important that the foreman be knowledgeable concerning cost, especially as related to direct labor, direct material, indirect labor, tooling, overhead, and supplies.

The foremen of the 50's and 60's came primarily from a strong manufacturing background and rose from the ranks of the production workers. It was not until the late 60's that a number of "college graduates in training" entered the workforce as supervisors on the factory floor. Having little or no practical experience or manufacturing background, they gradually began to replace the old timers who had graduated from the "school of hard knocks" and could not compete with a college degree. It was not until the late 1960's that blacks and an exceptional female were permitted to join the management team at the supervisory level.

For the most part, the decades of the 1950's and 1960's remained relatively stable for the supervisors. There was a lot of internal competition between departments and efficiency numbers remained high. Mass production volume was at a peak and the factories were operating at near full capacity. Moreover, a formal structure was in place that clarified the supervisor's role and provided a common set of values for acceptable behavior. It wasn't until the mid-1970's that this stable structure began to disintegrate. The old ways of doing business began to be replaced with new management philosophies and techniques very different from the past. The supervisor's role understandably began to change also. The problems faced by the supervisors in this transition from the past to the current first-line supervisor is discussed in detail in the next section.

FOOTNOTES

1. Bittel, Lester R., "What Every Supervisor Should Know", McGraw-Hill Co., New York, N.Y., 1959, p. 3.
2. Kelley, Robert E., "The Gold Collar Worker - Harnessing The Brainpower", Addison-Wesley Pub., Inc., Reading, Mass., 1985, p. 27.
3. Brody, E.W., "The Business Of Public Relations", Praeger Pub, New York, N.Y., 1987, p. 9.
4. Brody, p. 9.
5. Business Week, April 25, 1983, p. 74.
6. Kouzes, James M., & Posner, Barry Z., "The Leadership Challenger - How To Get Extraordinary Things Done In Organizations", Jossey-Bass Pub., San Francisco, Ca., 1987, p. 267
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"THE SUPERVISOR OF TODAY"

THE 1970'S UP TO THE PRESENT

PART III

LACK OF A VISION - The role of the supervisors in the seventies and eighties was shaky and uncertain as they faced shifting managerial philosophies and a transition from the protestant to the social work ethic.

These supervisors were viewed as potential change agents to initiate and nurture organizational renewal by both upper management and local union officials. The indicators of necessary or desirable change provided to them in organizational products, processes, or structures, however, were unclear and often contradictory.

These same supervisors of the seventies and eighties are the supervisors of today. Economic recessions of the mid-seventies and eighties curtailed any wide-spread hiring of additional supervisory personnel. Cutbacks in first-line supervisors during this time, excepting those that have since retired, have left plant operating personnel essentially the same over the past fifteen to twenty years. With the exception of engineering positions filled by choice selections, there have been only a few first-line supervisors hired.

The organizational structure has become "lean" and any excess heads have been removed. According to the Flint, Michigan, Area Occupational Employment Projections of the years 1985-1995, the number of blue collar worker

supervisors has declined from 3,600 in 1985 and will continue to do so with only 3,100 in 1995. Fewer in number, they are currently having to function within a system full of mega-problems which are many-sided and have far-reaching ramifications-not simply with a highly defined problem that they were able to solve alone.

Today's supervisors can longer depend upon the signposts of past experiences to provide examples of how to perform in their managerial role. In place of orderly experience and general predictability the manager now experiences complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty, conflict, and incongruity. It is fast becoming the general opinion of employees in the plants, both hourly and salary, that "Management is becoming less the manipulation of things and people and more the manipulation of ideas and concepts. This means that organizational human resources, the principal input of knowledge, must change to keep pace with the requirements of a more complex management system." 1

The acceptance of these changes in managerial style, both career and personal, will come easier to those who can tolerate ambiguity, who can cope with temporary relationships, and who can break with tradition. The transition to learning these new managerial skills will be smoothest for those who thrive on complexity and conflict.

Drastic changes in managerial style are understandably difficult for those supervisors that were trained in the more traditional methods of management by the "old timers" with whom they first worked. These supervisors learned from the old masters the tricks of the trade in dealing with people, problems, equipment, schedules, safety, and every other aspect of their management role. It is therefore no surprise that a majority of these present day supervisors, direct by-products of a more traditional era of management, are exhibiting many symptoms of difficulty in assimilating uncommon change. Mixed emotional stress, feelings of anxiety, depression, defensiveness, concern, and helplessness, along with escalating rises in white-collar absenteeism and requests for early retirements reflect the growing discontent among this portion of the workforce and will be discussed further in this section.

Historically speaking, supervision used to be a technical profession, now it is a combination of social work and psychiatry. Supervisors are now being called upon to assume new roles as participants in problem identification and promote departmental employees as equal partners in decision making. They are being asked to behave in a manner quite different from what has been expected of them traditionally and many find this transition difficult at best.

Currently first-line supervisors are being encouraged to develop their sophistication and improve their education. As mechanization, automation, computerization, and electronic instrumentation continue to change the factory layout, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the educational level of the first-line manager must rise. Greater record keeping will be required so that future operations can be controlled more meticulously. The expanded use of statistical methods to improve quality, repeatability, and predictability is becoming more and more important. Supervisors schooled in past practices see little need for this push toward mathematical approaches to problem solving and would much rather resort to the more comfortable methods of the past.

PREREQUISITES FOR SUCCESS - Today's supervisors must have more intelligence, understanding, and people sensitivity than ever before. In order to satisfy upper management they must keep their workers reasonably happy, and still achieve the established production, quality, and cost goals set for them. All of this must be accomplished within the terms of a union contract that insures that peoples rights are not infringed upon and additional work tasks assigned to them!

Today's supervisor is still responsible for bringing management and the employees closer together but is expected to employ far different tactics than their predecessors.

The supervisor of today must be one who can understand changing technology and interpret it to new employees. Morale of the older workers who find it increasingly difficult to perceive their individual contribution to mass or modern production must be maintained. An informed and understanding supervisor in particular is needed in the present era of advancing technological change and the "new breed" of informed and well educated workers. They are likewise pressured by workers as well as management to maintain high standards of physical comfort and safety. Some old time foremen find that this is an indication of softness in the modern generation, hence, another point of dissention.

Extensive studies have been conducted over the past few years on the changing role of the first-line supervisor. In each case, the reason has remained the same. A crisis or critical event of some kind had prompted the union and plant management to reassess their approach to the establishment of a good labor-management relationship. A loss of production contracts, plant closings, and overseas market gain called for extensive

revamping of plant systems and policies. Resolution to start a new way of working together towards a common goal has resulted in a commitment from both sides to a different way of running the business. This changing relationship between union and management has understandably been a cause for concern, and in some instances, alarm for the first-line supervisors.

Changing to a more participative style of management which provides workers with the opportunity to assume additional responsibility and autonomy blurs the distinction between what has traditionally been conceived as managerial work and hourly employee work. In participative work systems, there is no longer a distinction between what is clearly the employee and clearly the supervisory work assignment. This is perhaps the source of greatest concern for today's supervisor. In a team or participatory management system, a cluster of "oughts" is placed upon the supervisor.

Rather than clear-cut roles and expectations which traditionally were laid out and followed to the letter by the supervisors, they now have several "suggested" ways of behavior modification they are expected to incorporate into their own individual styles. The supervisor of today, contrary to the ways they were trained, and the ways they best understand, "ought" to supervise in a way that enables the workers themselves to assume

responsibility for most or all of the required coordination of both external and internal departmental activities, to train each other, to take on many of the planning and scheduling functions of the unit, to be problem solvers in crisis situations, to develop innovative process improvement procedures and to support and coach their fellow workers. The supervisor, in other words, is expected to delegate as many as possible of his functions. He "ought" to work himself out of a job completely or at least to some significant extent.

PROFILE OF TODAY'S SUPERVISOR

Every ten years the Bureau of Labor Statistics conducts an analysis on the pool of people it refers to as its "Labor Force".

This group includes everyone currently employed in full or part-time positions. Due to the confidentiality of corporate records the figures remain generalized. However, some conclusions can be drawn from these figures when assembled in an entirety.

FLINT, MICHIGAN - The following figures represent the proportion of employed persons in the population as a whole. According to the 1980 census poll, for example, 73% of all men aged 20 or over were employed.

Back in 1948, when fewer people were in college and retirements came later, the figure was 80%. However, for women of 20 and over, the employment ratio went from 30% to 48% between 1948 and 1980.

Altogether, 82.3% of white men had some kind of employment as did 72.1% of black men. Among white women, 58.2% were employed as were 55.8% of black women.

Wage and salaried employees in full-time occupations put in an average workweek of 42.3 hours.

In 1980, for every \$1,000 made by a male blue-collar worker supervisor, the women received \$642.00 by comparison.

In 1960, the labor force was composed of 33.4% of women and 66.6% of men, but by 1980, women accounted for 42.4% and men 57.6%. Looking at it another way, labor force participation of women rose from 37.7% in 1960 to 54.4% in 1980. During this time, the ratio of men actually fell, from 83.3% to 77.6%.

In 1970, of the 9,956 "craftsmen, foremen, or kindred workers" employed in the Flint, Michigan area, 378 were women, only 3.8%. Since then, the 1980 figures indicate that women in the Flint area comprise just over 10.2% of this section of the workforce.

Interesting also is the fact that these figures show that in 1980, only 3.7% of the labor force were of foreign born parents (both father and mother), which is a marked change from the high percentage of European-born parentage of supervisors in the early 1900's. This statistic is interesting for two very important reasons.

First, the number of skilled immigrants has declined significantly since the turn of the century, and secondly, the high number of laborers needed for production has dwindled with downturns in the economy. Jobs are no longer as plentiful and as available as in the past.

ABSENCE OF SUPPORT - Supervisors have always been subject to pressures from above and below since they are

"below all other managers but everyone below them has the union for protection." Supervisors are now feeling some severe pressure. Supervisors in the industrial workforce today are clearly getting the message from upper management as well as joint union-management human relations teams that they are supposed to use a more participative style and solicit input from their employees. Among supervisors there is a mixed reaction to this change. Many do not clearly understand the change, but most do see that things just are not working as well as they did in the past. A high percentage would rather continue working in the traditional mode and hope for the best. Many have voiced the opinion that "afterall, we've had problems before and have always come out on top. We will again this time. General Motors is too big to let anything happen to it." This unrealistic optimism is also a great concern especially among the higher level of management who see an entirely different picture. Some supervisors feel threatened and uncomfortable with having to change the way they view their jobs and their subordinates. Lack of trust on both sides causes conflict daily between hourly employees who attempt to take on more responsibility without really knowing what is involved and supervisors who see just another part of their authority and power being stripped away. Some supervisors feel that

there is no way to get employees to work anymore and that this is just a management "give away the farm" program where management is stepping aside and the union is running the plant. Many see participative management as "permissive" management and ask themselves why they should care anymore. Today's supervisors feel that "afterall, their opinion doesn't count." "These are the people who feel powerless, who tend to hoard whatever shreds of power they have. Powerless managers also tend to adopt petty and dictatorial management styles. Powerlessness creates organization systems where political skills become essential and "cover yourself" and "passing the buck" become the preferred styles for handling interdepartmental differences." 2

Behavior patterns such as these are currently being exhibited by today's supervisor's. In the minority are the supervisors who feel that if people are given the opportunity, presented with a challenge, and encouraged along the way then the hourly population will gradually assume responsibility for their actions. Both opinions seem to be supported by current industrial supervisors. Lack of a consistent vision by upper-management and high ranking union officials tends to make supervisors uneasy. They feel that there is little or no support for them when they try the new methods and don't succeed for the first time.

James Kouzes and Barry Posner, in their book, "The Leadership Challenge-How To Get Extraordinary Things Done In Organizations" used a definition that could be likened to today's supervisors: "They are people of an uncertain group; those who did not know what would happen to them, who exhibited the most stress and hostility. They felt stuck, unresolved and angry for being in their situation. The old rules had broken down, and there were no new rules in place." 3

Some supervisors feel that in a more participative style they will have more explaining to do and have to ask more peoples opinions rather than telling them what to do, supply more information to groups, and occasionally support the group's idea rather than their own. This will undoubtedly require more time and effort on the part of the supervisor which many are not looking forward to.

INSUFFICIENT BACKGROUND - During the 1970's and 1980's, the supervisors were trained on primarily mechanical and contractual aspects of the job. Each supervisor was expected to attend forty hours of both pre-supervisory and supervisory training.

The two columns below list the table of contents from two reference manuals for supervisors used in these training sessions.

| 1973 | 1982 |
|---|---|
| The Administration & Control of Relief Practices | Absenteeism |
| Grievances | Committee Representation |
| Grievance Procedures | Constructive Discipline |
| Role of the Committeeman | Corrective Discipline |
| How to Control Absenteeism | Formal Discipline |
| How to Control Efficiency | Efficiency |
| Paragraph 215 | Energy & Utility Conservation |
| Paragraph 21 | General Stores |
| Suspensions | Grievances |
| Plant Engineering | Grievance Procedures |
| Maintenance Engineering | Hazardous Materials |
| Salvage | Industrial Engineering |
| Shop Rules | Maintenance Engineering |
| General Stores Functions | Paragraph 21 (Job Status of Committeeman) |

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Hazardous Materials | Paragraph 76 (a) (Disciplinary Layoff or Discharge) |
| Tool Room Functions | Paragraph 215 (Supervisors Working on Hourly Jobs) |
| Tooling Costs & Control | Plant Engineering |
| Industrial Engineering Functions | Plant Security |
| Time & Attendance System | Reliability |
| Plant Security Functions | Relief Practices |
| | Salvage |
| | Shop Rules |
| | Suspension Procedure |
| | Time & Attendance System |
| | Temporary Hourly Employees |
| | Tool Room |
| | Tooling Costs & Control |

It is important to note, in both columns, the total and conspicuous absence of any human relations or "soft-side" training that was available to supervisors during these two decades. Policies and procedures dealing with committee personnel, discipline, contract paragraphs, and safety rules were covered extensively but nowhere in

either manual were such topics as employee and resource development, interpersonal communications and presentation skills, and meeting and listening techniques. Technical classes such as statistical math and statistical process control methods were likewise ignored. Today's supervisors have little or no background in any of these people oriented or scientific techniques and feel left out and unable to respond when called upon to employ skills they never developed or had the need for.

Pressures from overseas and the customer demand for "quality" above all else has placed greater emphasis on building a superior product rather than merely a functional one. Some supervisors feel not enough responsibility has yet been placed upon the hourly worker and that they are still held accountable for now not only the number of parts built but for their quality as well. There are some supervisors who feel discouraged because some elements of the production process are beyond their control. They do not yet know how to encourage an employee to build good parts because they "want to" and because it is the "right thing to do." How do you instill conscientiousness in a person who for years was told and believed that if a piece was functional it "was good enough?" Today the cosmetic appearance as well as whether or not a piece works is equally important. "Beginning in the late nineteen

seventies and continuing through the eighties, upper management's responsive-proactive strategies have been more the result of recognition of the potential impact of a hostile environment (trade laws, government regulation, etc.) than of purposely developing change-responsive organizations and philosophies. The absence of a well-designed and planned program where the new skills of ambiguity resolution, and conflict management to support floor level managers through this "transitional stage" is becoming more and more apparent." 4

Today's large corporations are hurrying to catch up with the competition in more ways than one. Inability to deal with the rapidity of social and technological change has put many of our industrial giants into a tailspin. Forward planning for the future in both of these arenas is fast becoming a priority however.

FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY - Today's supervisors are struggling to maintain some semblance of order in organizations bound either by traditional philosophies of management or those organizations that in trying to remain solvent are resorting to any means possible, be it permissive management or lack of management altogether.

Supervisors who feel they are unable to adapt to this style of participative manager are therefore opposing any attempts at change in any way they can. What needs to be

stressed is that their obsolescence can only be avoided through retraining and development, not by the use of power to delay and resist change. This obsolescence results in varying degrees of trauma for the displaced individual. The first-line supervisor who has invested considerable time and effort and knows only what he has learned first hand is now feeling emotional let down and even more serious physiological illis as ne percieves his impending decline in status and authority. Studies conducted in 1987 indicate that work has become a place where we seek meaning and identity. In the United States, work has become as important as family to life satisfaction.

The average working American spends approximately seventy percent of their waking-hours at work or performing work related tasks. Articles continue to be published in magazines and newspapers describing the working parents dilemma in attempting to balance a full-time job and maintain a structured family life of quality time with their children. In addition, many couples are waiting until much later in life to have children with a growing number opting not to have any children at all. Knowing this information, what then happens when the high percentage that supervisors gave to career fulfillment is thought of in negative rather than positive terms? If job satisfaction is so important and so many supervisors are extremely unhappy, what kind of an effort are they making toward improved job performance?

The figures below indicate the emphasis three levels of management place on three conditions of life. In the case of the supervisor, a much higher percentage is placed upon career fulfillment (45.8%) in relation to homelife (36.8%). Even outside interests which could be anything from education, hobbies, sports, etc. play a comparatively small role in personal satisfaction.

| | TOTAL | SUPV. | MIDDLE | EXECUTIVE |
|--------------|-------|--------------|--------|-----------|
| HOME LIFE | 40.1% | <u>36.8%</u> | 46.1% | 37.8% |
| OUTSIDE INT. | 9.8% | <u>17.4%</u> | 11.3% | 7.9% |
| CAREER | 50.1% | <u>45.8%</u> | 42.6% | 54.3% |

Additional surveys conducted over the last five years in General Motors plants reveal the high level of frustration felt by the supervisor. An important note is that these same supervisors, when asked to fill out a similar survey five years earlier, expressed significantly more positive comments about themselves and their jobs. A conclusion can be drawn, therefore, that this change in attitude where the supervisors level of job satisfaction was noticeably higher has occurred within the last five to seven years.

The issues/concerns facing today's supervisors are found below though not necessarily in any order of importance.

- * No support from upper-management
- * Management cares more about the hourly worker than us
- * Supervisors have little incentive (loss of cost of living, attendance bonus, pay, car discounts, etc.)
- * Upper levels say one thing and do something else
- * Held accountable for problems we can't solve
- * No structure in place - work for someone else every other day
- * Fewer supervisors to cover too large an area
- * Where will G.M. put us when they don't need us?
- * Lack of urgency from support groups (maintenance, engineering, etc.)
- * Insufficient training on "new" ways of dealing with people
- * Hard to break people free from production lines for training classes
- * Most employees don't have the interest of the plant at heart
- * Employees use participative management as an excuse to get out of work. Don't do a full day's work anymore
- * High absenteeism that isn't controlled
- * No one listens to us. Opinions are asked for but that's as far as it goes
- * Promotions are only for those who know someone higher up
- * "Just in Time" won't work. Rather have a bank (reserve) of parts ahead
- * Plant managers and superintendents change every six months

- * Upper level managers don't agree on visions for the future so how can we?
- * Lack of communications and upper level commitment of where we're going with the change
- * Participative management is just another program
- * Fewer of us are doing more and others are doing less!
- * Quality should have been emphasized years ago and now it's too late
- * Supervisors are forced to participate with little or no input or told that there is no place for them
- * Trust doesn't exist anymore. You can't believe anything anyone tells you

UNION RELATED ISSUES:

- * Union isn't taking an active enough role in the transition
- * Union resorts back to old style when they don't get what they want
- * Appointed union officials are using the system as a stepping stone to higher offices
- * Committeeman is participating in too many decisions
- * Employees can manipulate the participative process
- * Union personnel have access to financial resources and we can't even buy pencils

PLANNING FOR CHANGE - The above results of brainstorming sessions with groups of supervisors are striking examples of frustration stemming from a variety of unrealistic role conceptions set for them along with a number of shortcomings on the part of upper-management implementing those few more realistically formulated roles

that do exist. Supervisors seemed to feel that between the theories of team formation and participative management lies a great deal of uncharted territory. There was no action plan, and no sense of how to get there from here.

The general feeling is that the organization must provide for investment in training to develop the technical and organizational skills required to make the transition more smoothly to self-managed workgroups. The organization must also insure that the supervisor has some positive net incentive to delegate their past functions to the work group. Most important of all, and of utmost concern to the supervisor, the organization must consider how to employ productively the freed-up capacity of supervisors when they do successfully work themselves out of some of their supervisory jobs. Just telling the supervisors that as soon as their departmental teams have assumed their "traditional" roles and responsibilities they will be available for greater and bigger things but not really defining in concrete terms what these things are only adds fuel to the fire of distrust and dissent. The supervisor may be freed-up for additional business planning and upper-level management functions but who is really going to believe that these upper level managers are any more eager to hand over their strings of authority than the supervisors.

Participative management cannot be decreed. Careful development and redesign of personnel and control systems is required. Above all else, an understanding and agreement about goals and principles must be agreed upon by all involved groups. It must be understood that over time the players may change and some of the ideas may undergo revision, but the overall goal must remain the same. Many of the plants whose supervisory surveys parallel those listed earlier have chosen to call in outside resources (consultants) and conduct off-sites and meetings where supervisors could air their opinions as a group. At some of these off-sites upper-management was purposely "uninvited" so that the supervisors would feel less intimidated and more likely to speak up than if their immediate superior was sitting in the room. Many of these "clearing the air" sessions proved to be quite fruitful though often "ugly." Deep feelings of resentment over loss of authority, privileges, and money were echoed by the first-line supervisors in mass.

After these initial sessions, the results were in most cases presented to upper-management and a second meeting took place. Union representatives were invited to participate in some of these second meetings so that they too could hear and perhaps understand some of the feelings felt by floor supervision. What became very

evident was that though attempts had been made to promote team structures within a department, no provision for attending to the supervisor's need to share feelings with each other about their new role, and to develop their own voice in the organization had been designed. In most cases the recognition came after the need was most acutely felt. While hourly employees formed departmental teams, the supervisor's felt left out and uninvolved. Typically they assumed that they could not get their own concerns attended to as readily as can most other groups in the organization. An underlying fallacy may be that only the quality of work life of the hourly workers counts and even more important was the realization that upper-management and union personnel alike accepted that without question.

Key to the success of any employee participation program is the commitment from the leadership of both union and management to work together over a sustained period of time and the realization that the first-line supervisors play an integral part in this change. By their actions these supervisors have the ability to make or break the new delicately constructed work teams.

Frequent reassignment of supervisory personnel has also hindered the developmental process of supervisors in relation to self-managed work groups. Managers often pay inadequate attention to the need for stability in

implementing innovative supervisory roles. Short term placement within a group does not permit the development of effective personal relations and mutual understanding regarding new role responsibilities. Great care must be taken to minimize upsetting what is already a fragile but dynamic process.

MISCONCEPTIONS OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT - What has surfaced as a serious oversight among organizations attempting to institute change from traditional to participative work systems is the assumption that these "teams" would start at an advanced state of development. Neglected was the distinction between conceiving of the design of where they pictured themselves ten years from now and where they would have progressed just six months into the developmental process. What came to be expected was an instant role change with ideally formed players acting out their roles in perfect accord. In reality, groups of people behaving more like "mobs" than teams became the norm. Smooth running teams do not develop overnight. Just as human beings must learn to crawl before they walk, teams must learn from their mistakes and keep trying until they can stand alone. Team development is a process which cannot be hurried along. Costly mistakes will be made with members initially lacking the technical and human skills to perform effectively. Unrealistic expectations of both team members

and supervisors have to be continually revised and tried out again and again. Some organizations need to be prepared for the supervisor periodically to assume their traditional role when the group is foundering and support these supervisors when this does happen. All too often, the supervisor will be held directly responsible for a group's failure when other negative factors contributed.

Many organizations who have allocated extensive resources directed at training workers and work groups have failed to recognize the need for new supervisory skills. This failure can generally be attributed to the variance between the substance of the training and the realities of the job. The integration of role orientation, supervisory distance, task environments, and expectations and abilities of subordinates can rarely be simulated in a classroom. Actual experience on the factory floor in real-life situation has historically proven to be the best teacher.

What has actually happened is that inadequate training has been provided for a supervisor who must deal with a highly participative group and doesn't know how to handle them. Furthermore, few if any, role models have been provided for a supervisor who has the job of developing a subordinate group to the point they are no longer needed.

Large industrial organizations must begin now to provide two separate strategies for their supervisors to become more responsive to the changing management styles. They must employ various techniques such as management development, participative leadership, and some sort of structured organizational process that will create a more productive and hopefully satisfying internal environment for the current supervisory workforce.

Secondly, they must plan another for the generation that has yet to attain their most productive state of development—the supervisor of the FUTURE and LEADER of tomorrow.

The following section will examine the transformation of the supervisors from the point where they find themselves today and the changes into the leader needed for the factory of the future. The challenges and expectations that they will face as this evolution takes place will be described in detail later.

FOOTNOTES

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1. Basil, Douglas C., & Cook, Curtis W., The Management Of Change", McGraw-Hill Co., United Kingdom, 1974., P. 109.
2. Kouzes, James M., & Posner, Barry Z., "The Leadership Challenge- How To Get Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations", Jossey-Bass Pub., San Francisco, Ca., 1987., P. 163.
3. Kouzes, P. 70.
4. Basil, P. 82.

"TOMORROW'S FUTURE LEADER"

THE CHALLENGE IS NOW!

PART IV

"The visions of the past leaders have been in tune with work ethics that emphasized different aspects of self-development - the puritan ethic, service; and with the craft ethic, industry, discipline, and independence. The entrepreneurial ethic emphasized courage and innovation; the career ethic, fairness and technical skills. A work ethic for an age of interdependence must emphasize positive values rooted in the new character; life-long learning, mutual respect, tolerance, responsible participation in principled problem solving and sociotechnical innovation." 1

THE NEW CHARACTER - Today's breed of supervisor is now more involved in training and coaching workers, securing resources and information for their work teams, and facilitating daily problem solving. Frequently responsible for communication and coordination across shifts and throughout the production complex, many supervisors are being separated from the minute to-minute operations so that they can become more involved in the process of changing the way the work is being managed. Their role is becoming that of a leader, a trainer, and a team developer, not any longer that of a task master.

The greater involvement of the hourly worker in the day-to-day decision making process does not have to result in the elimination of the supervisor. What does change, however, is the traditional role of the supervisor as it is viewed today. In many instances,

the supervisor is becoming more important than ever before, but for different reasons. The supervisor's job has undoubtedly changed because supervisors have delegated most of their traditional inspection and decision-making functions to the workers. These workers may also have taken on traditional supervisory responsibilities such as distributing job assignments, equalization of hours for overtime purposes, scheduling of relief and lunch breaks and line changeovers. This can free up the supervisor to actively listen to what the workers have to say, use the ideas of the experts on the floor, and focus on problem-solving rather than handing out discipline. Considerably more time is available for the leader (supervisor) to work with maintenance people, draw up better plans for the flow of material, and make needed engineering changes simultaneously instead of having to call upon the plant engineering staff. With the team/group leader seeing to it that more decisions are brought down to the floor level many problems can often be eliminated before they develop into something more serious.

The concept of "nurturing" employee development will become critical for the future leader. Individuals in this role will become counselors and mentors to those workers previously assigned them as subordinates. Communicating details and sharing more

information than ever before and the reasons certain decisions are made will become major employee relations responsibilities of the leader.

The role of tomorrow's leader will involve nourishing, cultivating, and maintaining environments for personal growth. Authoritarian/traditional management styles will yield to "networking" systems of interrelating departments and processes. An effective leader will no longer manage by Machiavellian techniques, which threaten and terrorize. The effective leader, by example, appearance, and expressed values becomes a model that others will want to emulate. A successful leader draws out, prompts, and defends the attitudes and beliefs that are shared by members of the group he or she leads.

True leaders cannot be merely successful within the confines of their own particular job assignment. They must also be able to bring out the very best in their people by encouraging creativity, willingness to participate without fear of reprisal, and support the group when they occasionally falter. A confident leader is able to give away power and let others share the functions of leadership without becoming insecure. They maintain the right to become assertive on issues of principle and defend basic values of human dignity, mutual respect, and assure everyone is heard even when the majority is opposed.

This transformation of today's supervisor to the confident leader of tomorrow will require a vast amount of time and training. Values and basic traditional theories of management ingrained in people over years and years of experience cannot be erased overnight. Traditional management teachings emphasized that the job of management was primarily one of control. The control of resources which included people, money, time, and material. A perceptual leader now realizes that the more they attempt to control the actions of others, the more people are likely to accomplish less. People do not like to be hovered over and looked upon as children of the benevolent parent who is waiting for them to make a mistake. The effective leader allows others to act on their own and does not punish when an error is made but instead relies upon it as a learning experience for the group to benefit from.

Tradition has led us to believe that managers direct and control others by giving orders and by issuing policies and procedures. Present day experiences are now telling us that the leaders deeds are far more important than their words. Credibility of action is becoming the single most significant element of whether a leader will be followed over an extended length of time. The greatest contribution a leader will make lies not in today's organization but in the long-term development

of people and institutions who prosper and grow. An effective leader will be responsible for showing their team how present day challenges will actually help shape a better tomorrow.

Leadership development is ultimately one of self-development and the evolution from present day supervisor to the leader of the future becomes a personal challenge that all will not accept readily.

What is happening today is that many supervisors feel that they are either too old, too set in their old ways, or that they just do not possess the skills necessary to make the change. Being asked to behave in a manner quite different from what has been expected of them traditionally, the emerging style of leader needed for a transition of this magnitude must become proficient in human relations and communications techniques. Understandably, the present day supervisor feels unnerved by such a radical departure from the past.

A number of current supervisors have opted to seek out pre-retirement age packages and even accepted considerable reductions in monthly pensions so as not to have to participate in changes which they find unsettling. Others have simply requested transfers to other parts of the organization that are not yet exhibiting signs of going to a more participative style of management.

Many more, however, particularly those between the ages of 35-50, have a considerable personal investment with the corporation and have many years of productive work ahead of them until retirement. This is the group that needs the attention and retraining so that they will develop and acquire the expertise needed for tomorrow's leader. They are much like the coach of any sports team. After years of education and practice themselves they become ready to take over their first squad. Rough and uncut as they be at first, they need to be molded and formed into a fine-tuned machine that performs at its best when each person is working toward the good of the entire team. A sports team that is only as good as the sum of its players is similar to the production team on the floor who can function optimally only when each member contributes to the process.

Understandably everyone may choose not to participate at the same level. Many departments, as do teams, have "silent" leaders that lead more by example and gesture and prefer to remain in the background instead of the spotlight.

Another segment of the workforce may oppose the transition and may never be won over to the partnership of management and union running the business. This group can come from the ranks of both hourly and salaried employees alike.

Only after this is realized and accepted can the real work of transforming the everyday aspects of doing business begin.

This must be concentrated upon knowing full well that all will not participate and that some may even thwart development activities. The resourceful leader must rely upon any avenue open and keep the group on track. Not an easy task by any means, the traditional supervisor attempting to redefine roles and expectations, may occasionally slip back into the old style of management from time to time. This needs to be expected and will more than likely happen again and again. The work group may do the same after becoming frustrated and feeling that no progress is being made and may ask for a supervisor to handle their departmental problems.

Supervisors in the past were not responsible for analyzing existing organizational structures and determining missions and objectives. Rules, policies, and procedures were sent down the organizational ladder from upper staff levels and questions were unthinkable. Floor supervision was never involved in the development of any long-range planning and were only concerned with getting the job done and the parts out the door in the fastest way possible.

The chart on the following pages provides an accurate profile on management styles both past and future. These characteristics describe many of the attitudes and opinions felt most often by middle and lower management personnel. Listed as past and future, they are, in most cases, direct opposites of each and parallel

the differences between the roles of past and future supervisors. Feelings of past supervisors, for example, are reflected in protective ownerships (surrogate) for people and departments as well-as power and reward seekers. On the other hand, future leaders will be asked to manage in a more professional or information sharing manner that many will find difficult. Future leaders will be asked to view work systems for personal enrichment (social value optimizer) rather than past monetary gains (profit optimizer). Most corporations involved in any change process today find themselves somewhere in between periodically shifting back and forth as problems, issues, and successes impact the structure.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MANAGEMENT

| Past | Future |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Values & Attitudes | |
| Surrogate owner | Professional |
| Committed to laissez-faire | Committed to social value of free enterprise |
| Profit optimizer | Social value optimizer |
| Seeks economic rewards & power | Seeks job satisfaction |
| Seeks stability | Seeks change |
| Prefers incremental change | Prefers entrepreneurial change |
| Basis of Managerial Authority | |
| Surrogate asset ownership | Knowledge ownership |
| Power to hire & fire | Expertise |
| Power to reward & punish | Ability to challenge |
| Management Decision-Making | |
| Change absorbing | Change generating |
| Risk minimizing | Risk propensive |
| Triggered by problems | Triggered by opportunities |
| Serial diagnosis | Parallel diagnosis |
| Convergent | Divergent |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Consistent with experience | Novel |
| Incremental | Global |
| Sequential attention to goals | Simultaneous attention to goals |
| Satisfying | Optimizing |

Financial Systems

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Financial accounting | Human resource accounting |
| Capital budgeting | Capability accounting |
| Expense budgeting | Capability budgeting |
| Historical control | Action budgeting |
| Long-range (extrapolative) planning | Strategic entrepreneurial planning |
| | Forward control |

2

Extensive research conducted among industrial organizations attempting role transformations to participative management and team structures has determined five practices that are common among successful leaders. They are able to:

1. CHALLENGE THE PROCESS - Best described as modern day pioneers, they are the people who are willing to step out into the unknown and take action. Innovating and experimenting with new ideas and systems they are not afraid to fail and find a better way of doing things.

Those who become the best leaders take advantage of the broadest possible range of opportunities. They try, fail, and learn from their mistakes. True leaders are true experimenters. They experiment with new approaches to old problems. They are willing to go out on a limb in order to get new products, processes, and services adopted.

2. INSPIRE A SHARED VISION - They breathe life into the hopes and dreams of others and enable them to see possibilities that can be attained. They have been described as "lunatics with a mission." They support a plan in which both union and management have a clear picture of where they are going in the future and will work toward getting there together. Changing markets are viewed as sources of opportunity to expand current business and establish new businesses. They look forward to the future and are able to see what is possible if everyone works together for a common purpose. In the face of adversity they are able to remain positive about the future and they fervently defend their beliefs that people are the greatest resource we have.

3. ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT - Leaders enlist the support and assistance of all those necessary to make a project a success. They involve the entire team from the janitor to the staff

engineer. They "empower" the work group to act on their own behalf without soliciting approval from a supervisor at every step in the process. By giving away some of their authority, they make it possible for others to do good work and accept responsibility for their actions. This is perhaps the hardest step in the change process that the current supervisor has to accept and support. Hearing, counseling, and accepting ideas from outside sources rather than their own is a drastic change from traditional management thinking and most difficult to accept.

4. MODEL THE WAY - They establish values about how employees, peers, and customers ought to be treated. By their example they set standards of behaviour for others to follow as changes occur within the organization and even within the department. Positive reinforcement techniques and mutual goal setting are effective methods in encouraging employees to act on their own towards improved job performance. The new leader must constantly practice and preach teamwork, individual development, and talk in terms of we, not I, and you.

Responsible leaders are in touch with reality and know that they must "change" the business as usual environment and be able to show their people that even when things seem to be coming apart at the seams something new can be created from the pieces. A good leader has the ability to redefine differences and problems so that participants focus on "what is to be gained" rather than "what is to be lost."

5. ENCOURAGE THE HEART - Leaders must be able to keep their groups moving in a positive direction even when it appears that little progress is being made. It becomes easy for a group to become frustrated and give up when they run into seemingly unsurmountable problems. Making little or no headway for any length of time can make a team disenchanted and ready to fall back to the old ways of doing business where it was somebody else's job. The leader must be prepared to offer encouragement and assistance so that people will not give up. In other words, they must assemble the troupes, circle the wagons, and lead the charge for the next challenge set before them. Good leaders develop best when they are enthusiastic participants in change and keep the work group within sight of the ultimate goal.

The New York Times once ran an ad in the classified section which was interesting. It read:

"WANTED - CHANGE AGENTS - Results-oriented individuals able to accurately and quickly resolve tangible and intangible problems. Energy and ambition necessary for success." ³

The new emerging style of leader is now being referred to as the "main agent of change" in the transformation of the technological industrial society. In the field of planning, technical advances, and group dynamics, the change agent needs to be provided the new tools necessary for bringing about managed innovation. They must

be aware of and have a thorough understanding of the beliefs, values, and role expectations that underlie their companies business practices, management techniques, and strategies.

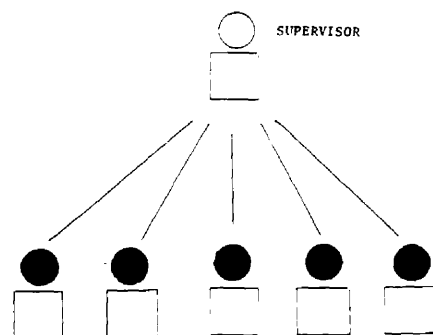
Typical manufacturing facilities tended to place people into jobs without any regard for their past experiences, interests, and hobbies. The total person was ignored except for a few select fragments. In contrast, the leader of the future will seek out employees who are willing to contribute more to the organization. Advocates of change, they firmly believe that putting authority into the hands of the workers and assigning management a more supportive role will make the plants more dynamic and responsive. More information than ever before will be shared so that decisions can be made on a more timely, uniform basis. The leader of the future can best be described in the following terms: mobile, self-motivated, seeker of personal and professional development, continuously adaptive, and comfortable with constantly changing organizational roles, relationships, and structures. The "superindustrial" persons are often part of a large complex system in which interdependence is the norm. They are indeed the "pioneers" that are unafraid to lead the way into the new culture of fast moving, fluid organizations of the future.

Traditional management taught that supervisors ought to be cool, aloof, and analytical- separating emotion from work. By comparison, when leaders of the future discuss things they are proudest of in their careers, they describe feelings of inspiration, passion, elation, intensity, challenge, and caring.

The transformation process from present day supervisory techniques to the emerging style of tomorrow's leader will be full of hardships and exhausting for everyone involved. Each and everyone will have to determine their own level of comfort when trying out new methods that measure current skills against newly required tasks. Supervisors strong in commitment to organizational restructuring to improve the adaptability of the system will be able to involve themselves wholeheartedly. Rarely at a loss for something to do, they put forth maximum effort cheerfully. In contrast, the alienated supervisor who chooses not to participate will find work boring and meaningless and stand back from involvement in the tasks they are assigned. The diagram below (author unknown) graphically illustrates the three stages of management development.

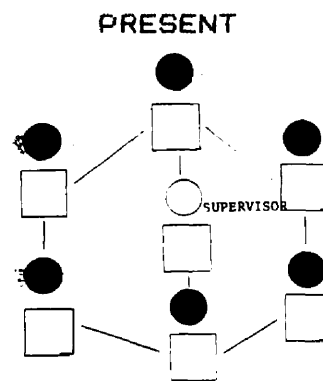
FIGURE I.

TRADITIONAL



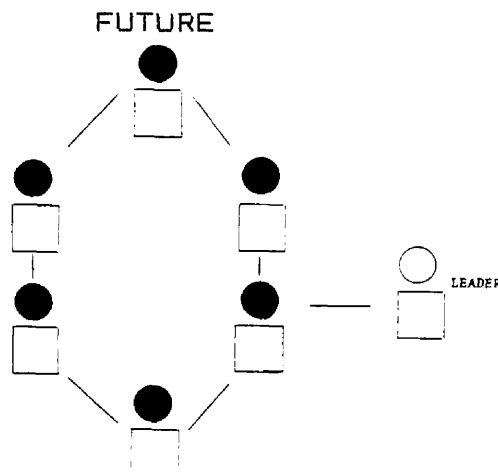
The one-on-one supervisor is the pattern most often seen in traditional organizations today. A supervisor is responsible for directing and controlling a number of employees who are each assigned a part of the operation. The supervisor is responsible for the total output of these employees and therefore wants each job to be filled by an adequate performer. The supervisor's status and effectiveness depends highly on skills in directing, monitoring, and controlling others. The demands of this role place severe stress on supervisors, particularly when they must manage individuals of different ability, age, race, sex, and motivation.

FIGURE II.



Developing employees need less one-on-one supervision. A supervisor can become more actively involved in management functions and less involved in the work itself. The supervisor is still, however, assigned a department on a full-time basis to handle strictly management functions such as pay, discipline, and overtime scheduling. This is the group not yet comfortable with their new role who tend to rely on the supervisor when problems arise they feel unable to handle themselves.

FIGURE III.



The leader of the future is removed from the group and no longer has one-on-one contact with individual members. As a matter of fact, this leader may have several groups to interact with on a regular basis. In this stage, the group has full responsibility for production output and activities and the supervisor assumes the role of "team resource person" available to a work group for any consultation or help that the group identifies itself as needing. This resource person can either furnish the help or obtain it from outside. The change from traditional to present to future styles of management is particularly difficult for those who are accustomed to observing the immediate activities of employees. Only after a group demonstrates its ability to function independently will the leader (supervisor) be at ease with their own role. Management of the future will require leaders capable of functioning in

an environment of constant change with their decision making based more on participation from the work group and information sharing than authority. This new leader will require a confident self-image based on clearly defined roles and expectations both for themselves and the total organization.

SUMMARY

In response to fierce competition, U.S. organizations have intensified measures to improve efficiency, productivity, and cut labor costs. This superheated competition has forced corporate structures to re-examine their traditional ways of doing business and look for ways to involve labor in the decision making process.

Recognition that perhaps the greatest asset lies in the area of "human resources" is leading the change from traditional to participative styles of leadership. The days of the strict, tough-talking line foreman are gone forever now being replaced by the group leader, guide, and counselor type of individual sensitive to the needs of the employees. The leader of the future has the responsibility to create an environment that encourages teamwork and motivation on a regular, not an occasional basis.

The transition to a participative style of management where each individual is equally important to the organization needs both leaders and followers who feel personally capable of successfully making the transition from the old to the new. It will require a special sort of individual who is willing to try something entirely new. Most important of all, it will require a person who can embark upon the change with an open mind and remain flexible over time.

Long term industry forecasts call for a 2.5 percent reduction in Flint, Michigan's area employment where economic activity revolves around its large manufacturing sector which accounts for 37 percent of the regions jobs. Personnel cutbacks and industry predictions foretell a loss of nearly 14 percent by 1995 in the manufacturing areas of operator, fabricator, and laborer occupational group. Due to hiring freezes and expanding areas of responsibility in the white-collar ranks we will see fewer people doing more and more. Hourly employees assuming the tasks previously assigned to only supervisors will provide the remaining salaried personnel the time needed for their new roles as trainers and resource persons. In areas that historically had a supervisor on each shift for each department, the leader of the future will have responsibilities spanning all three shifts over as many as five or six productive areas. With employment decreasing by 9,800 manufacturing related jobs by 1995 many of these will understandably be white-collar jobs that have to be assumed by the production worker on the factory floor.

Several ingredients key to the successful transition to a participative management structure involving all parties are:

1. A committed philosophy no matter who the players are. This commitment has to last through changes in management and through union elections. On-going and visible support from the top of both organizations is very important.

2. The right managers who truly support participation. This is where the new breed of supervisor plays an integral part in the transition. Strong upper management support for participation at the plant level is critical. When managers change, they must be replaced with people who have a strong understanding of the current programs in place.

3. Management must work with the union as partners in the business, not as second class citizens.

4. Strategic plan. Union and management both have to have a clear vision of where they are going in the future and work together towards getting there. Goals and missions have to be agreed upon by both parties and followed.

The building of human relationships through the team concept approach brings employees and managers closer together towards a common goal. Key to this is the role today's supervisors' see being created for them. The challenge and burden placed upon them is greater than ever before. Time, effort, pain, training,

and more training is necessary for a transformation of this magnitude to take place successfully. For those supervisors willing to make the effort the rewards will be great. Personal satisfaction for a job well done and pride in the development of a group of people that you played an important part in will do much in making the transition worthwhile. Good leaders are not born. They evolve over time and never stop learning and growing.

Leadership has been defined as being able to draw new boundaries, beyond the existing limits of ideas and activities. Only through this kind of leadership can we keep our institutions from drifting aimlessly to no purpose.

This is the invitation being extended to today's supervisor. What remains to be seen is who will rise to the occasion!

FOOTNOTES

1. Maccoby, Michael "The Leader, A New Face For American Management", Simon & Schuster, New York, N.Y., 1981., P. 52.
2. Ansoff, Ivan H., "Management in Transition", In Challenge to Leadership, Management in a Changing World, Free Press, 1973, P. 40-42.
3. Harris, P.R., & Harris, D.L., "Leadership Effectiveness With People", Phoenix, Ariz., General Cassette-Corp., 1978.